

NEWS & *views*

Economic Development Division

SPRING/SUMMER 2006

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News & Views, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Economic Development Division of the American Planning Association. We welcome articles, letters, suggestions and information regarding workshops and other educational opportunities for economic development professionals. Please forward your submissions by email to our Editor, Dr. Ned Murray, AICP (address below).

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Planning to Sustain Small Farms: An Upgrading Strategy for Farmers and Institutions

by Janelle Santos

In addition to its direct economic benefits, small-scale agriculture produces a variety of indirect benefits valued by many communities as public amenities, including scenic view sheds, agrarian cultural heritage, wildlife habitat, a personal connection to food, and enhanced local food security (Hellerstein et al., 2002; Rossett, 2000). In many regions in the U.S., the direct and indirect benefits have become under threat as market competition and real estate development have overtaken agricultural land for alternative uses (Hellerstein et al., 2002). In response, policy makers have sought to protect local agriculture through the implementation of fiscal incentives and land use controls such as preferential taxation; urban growth boundaries; development easements; and agricultural zoning by county, state, and federal governments (Nelson, 1992). These policy approaches may prevent the loss of agricultural land to development. However, they do not address

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Undated historic painting of the Aeolia Heights olive orchard in Auburn, Placer County, California. Source: Podunk website: www.epodunk.com.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR



It is with great pleasure that I begin my term as Chair of the Economic Development Division. The EDD is in a wonderful position to continue to serve economic development planning practitioners, thanks to the dedicated leadership that Terry Holzheimer has provided for the last two years. A hearty “thank

you,” Terry, for your work on behalf of all the members of EDD. Also, Bob Lewis needs to be recognized for his skillful work as Secretary-Treasurer for 2004-2006 — we all appreciate the balanced book situation.

Your participation in EDD is welcomed and needed for continued provision of timely and useful information to the profession. Consider submitting an article for *News & Views* by contacting our editor, Ned Murray

From the survey of members last Fall, you've suggested creating an economic development news link and a research section on economic development topics on the EDD website. Would you be willing to contribute to or head up either of these new initiatives?

at murrayn@fiu.edu. From the survey of members last Fall, you've suggested creating an *economic development news link* and a *research section on economic development topics* on the EDD website. Would you be willing to contribute to or head up either of these new initiatives? If so, contact me at rhondap@ufl.edu.

And...believe it or not, it is *annual conference time*...again already?! Actually it's time to submit

proposals for EDD sessions for next year's conference in Philadelphia (April 14-18). Our EDD conference chair is Kristin Szwajkowski with the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation — please submit proposals to her at kristins@pidc-pa.org before **August 25**.

Feel free to contact any member of the leadership team with your suggestions and ideas for the EDD. It exists to serve, and we look forward to working with you to respond to the needs of the economic development planning profession. ■

— Dr. Rhonda Phillips, AICP

IN THIS ISSUE OF NEWS & VIEWS



The Spring/Summer Issue of *News and Views* offers our readers several interesting and informative articles. In our lead article we are pleased to present our winning 2006 Student Essay “Planning to Sustain Small Farms: An Upgrading Strategy for Farmers and Institu-

tions” by Janelle Santos. Our second article, “Planners in Economic Development,” submitted by Kaizer Rangwala, AICP, offers perspectives from six practicing economic development professionals on the effectiveness of planners in economic development. Our final article, submitted by Jennifer Evans-Cowley, highlights the 2006 APA Excellence in Economic Development Award given to Ohio State University for planning assistance performed in Harrison County, Mississippi post-Hurricane Katrina.

Please contact me at (305) 349-1444 or murrayn@fiu.edu with any suggestions you may have for forthcoming articles in *News and Views*. ■

— Ned Murray, AICP, Editor

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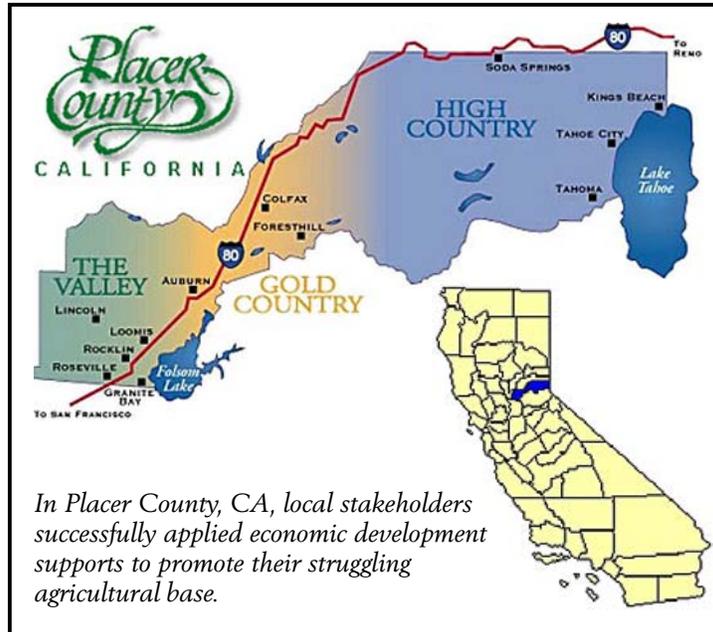
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the market challenges in small-scale farming that threaten economic viability.

This paper will argue that sustainability in small-scale farming requires *economic development supports* in addition to land use and fiscal policies. It will draw on a case in Placer County, California where local stakeholders successfully applied economic development supports in the form of production and marketing assistance to promote their struggling agricul-

tural base. Despite ongoing high population growth and urbanization in the region, the county's mandarin orange industry, which was nearly extinct two decades ago, has since undergone resurgence. This article identifies the conditions under which the revitalization of the mandarin industry occurred through an analysis of the



In Placer County, CA, local stakeholders successfully applied economic development supports to promote their struggling agricultural base.

actions taken by a county-level agricultural marketing agency, a local farm extension office, and the industry's growers.

Placer County has employed the model of direct marketing, an innovative strategy that involves the direct sale of commodities by farmers to consumers, to revive its mandarin industry. By creating direct consumer outlets, Placer County's farmers have secured markets and captured *retail* rather than the usually much lower

wholesale prices for the goods they produce. Through this strategy, and the higher earnings that it has made possible, farmers in Placer County have improved the long-term stability of their farms by increasing profitability, reducing market risks, and strengthening economic
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ties with their communities. Composed of small-scale orchards, the mandarin industry has become regionally competitive on the basis of quality in terms of freshness, taste, and purchasing experience. Despite rapid population growth, the industry has expanded in terms of acreage and the number of orchards while weaving itself into the local culture and landscape.

Economic Development Supports in Agriculture

In agriculture, institutions that provide economic development supports include farm extension agencies, which assist farmers in improving production activities; farmers markets, which create physical marketplaces where local produce is sold; and regional agricultural marketing organizations, which promote produce from a specific region to targeted consumers (American, 1998; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2003). This case demonstrates that economic development supports provided by such institutions can enable small-scale farming to become economically competitive. In Placer County a variety of local institutions, described below, have delivered services to support mandarin growers in production and marketing. The Placer/Nevada Counties University of California (UC) Extension, a farm advisory office, has provided production assistance specific to small-scale farming and citrus production. The Placer

SMALL-SCALE FARMING is defined by the USDA as a farm with “less than \$250,000 gross receipts annually on which day-to-day labor and management is provided by the farmer and/or the farm family that owns the production or owns or leases the productive assets.” Source: www.sustainabletable.org/intro/dictionary.

County Government has financially covered the extension office’s building and overhead costs. The Placer County Agricultural Marketing Director, situated within the Placer County Agriculture Department, has promoted the industry throughout the state and linked it to local arts and business groups. In addition, the Mountain Mandarin Growers’ Association, which represents the county’s mandarin growers, assists growers in addressing industry constraints and opportunities and coordinates with the UC Cooperative Extension and Agricultural Marketing Director.

After receiving assistance in production and marketing from such institutions, the mandarin industry has
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experienced substantial growth. In the last 17 years, the number of orchards in the county increased from five to sixty-five, a 13-fold increase. Between 1988 and 2006, the number of farmers' markets in the county increased from 2 to 17. In addition, attendance by visitors at the Mountain Mandarin Festival, a significant market outlet for the county's mandarin growers, increased from 1,500 to 35,000 between 1994 and 2005. This article argues that these institutions have been successful as a result of three main outgrowths that have stemmed from their work: collective efficiencies, trust among growers, and intersectoral linkages.

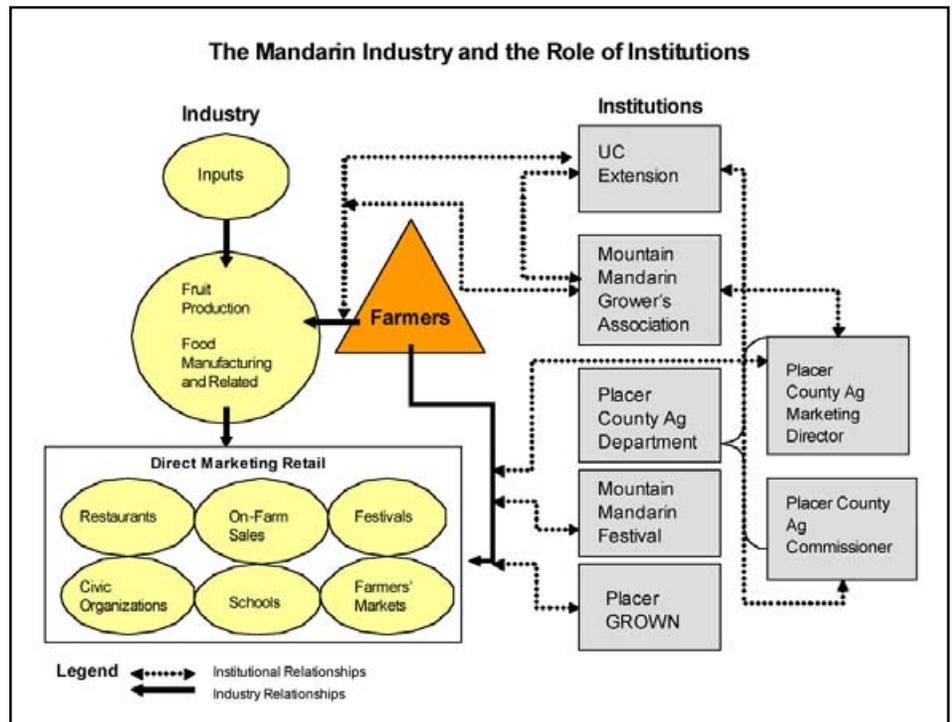
Collective Efficiencies

The UC Cooperative Extension and the Placer County Agriculture Department have helped the mandarin industry to develop collective efficiencies in production and marketing. Collective efficiencies are defined as resources that provide competitive advantages to all firms located in a regional industry. They include skilled labor and inputs, specialized knowledge, and market access (Schmitz, 1995). The development of collective efficiencies in the mandarin industry has been the result of a critical mass of capable leaders with a consistent vision and the creation of a deep knowledge base relevant to the region's small-scale farming needs. Incremental changes in leadership since the late 1990s has resulted in a current group of leaders that shares similar values and works effectively together. This has eased the process of mustering up the resources necessary to set goals and implement programs.

The mandarin industry has benefited in particular from the work of three local leaders: Cindy Fake, farm advisor at the UC Cooperative Extension; Christine Turner, the county's Agricultural Commissioner; and Joanne Neft, the county's Agricultural Marketing Director. Fake and Turner both indicate that they share a "great synergy" working together and with Neft. In addition to regulating the industry, Turner ensures that farmers are educated on county and state laws and promotes land use policies to the county government

that support agricultural interests. Fake has provided growers with specialized knowledge in small-scale farming and citrus production. Neft's marketing expertise, experience in social entrepreneurship, and passion for agriculture have enabled local farmers to expand their direct marketing opportunities. By exchanging their specialized knowledge and interacting directly with the region's farmers, Fake, Turner, and Neft have developed both a broad and deep understanding of the conditions facing small-scale agriculture in Placer County. They have applied this understanding to develop programs that respond directly to the region's small-scale farming needs.

Through their combined efforts, Turner, and Neft have created a deep knowledge base for farmers to access involving farm management, production and marketing. In addition to supplying their own expertise



to the industry, they bring in knowledge from other organizations, including a local university and regional and national leaders in sustainable small-scale farming. As a result, they have created a knowledge base that informs both their own decision making and helps farmers access specialized information related to their activities.

Cindy Fake, the UC Cooperative Extension farm advisor, solicits input from the growers when designing
(continued next page)

the workshops conducted by the UC Cooperative Extension. The extension has brought state and national leaders in small-scale farming and direct marketing into the region to provide information relevant to growers' needs. In 2005, for instance, the extension brought a national expert in agritourism to educate local farmers in a Farm Conference session. The UC Cooperative Extension has also incorporated information from the entire University of California system, which includes individual UC campuses and the UC Sustainable Agriculture and Research Program (SAREP), a state-wide program that produces research and education for agricultural and food systems (University, 2006b). The office of UC SAREP is based at UC, Davis, which is highly specialized in agricultural sciences and located closest to Placer County among the campuses in the UC system. UC SAREP researchers have produced a variety of research reports to support Placer County's agriculture and the mandarin industry in particular. Their studies have analyzed the past and present trends of the county's food supply, formulated cost studies for commodities appropriate to the region, and evaluated marketing opportunities for Placer County's mandarins in other regions.

Trust among Growers

Growing trust among growers has enabled individual mandarin growers to enhance production techniques and implement regional marketing strategies that they could not undertake alone. Direct marketing, as the most advantageous vehicle for securing local markets at retail prices, appeals to the needs of the entire grower community. Related group-centered programs in production and marketing through the UC Cooperative Extension, the Placer County Agriculture Department, and the Mountain Mandarin Growers' Association have created venues whereby mandarin growers have developed group trust and a shared identity by learning about their common interests and struggles in the industry. From this process, they have recognized that collaboration is essential in maintaining quality production and accessing regional direct markets. As a result, the region's growers rely upon each other in production and marketing activities to enhance their regional competitiveness.

The Shared Interests of Growers

There are two shared characteristics among the region's mandarin farmers that have helped facilitate trust. First, the county's mandarin growers are market driven and have a shared motive to keep their farms

economically viable. Although most farmers have second jobs and their farm income composes a smaller share of their total income, they consider their work a business. Fake states: "They rely on farm income, are serious about what they do, and are very committed, as demonstrated by the time they devote and their emphasis on quality."

Because farmers require retail prices to remain economically viable yet cannot access traditional retail outlets, they must target niche markets on the basis of quality. When asked what their consumers expect from their fruit, all of the growers interviewed indicated that quality was the most important attribute. To access local markets, they are vigilant about producing mandarins that are fresher and have a superior taste than those produced by corporate farms and sold in retail supermarkets. In turn, they have gained a reputation for quality.

The mandarin growers are concerned about protecting their shared reputation for quality. They are collectively represented by the region's PlacerGROWN brand and logo. One farmer illustrated the importance of quality and reputation by explaining, "A person may eat one hundred good mandarins, but only remember the bad one." The growers have assisted each other to maintain high quality. Starting in about 2002, a long-time mandarin grower coordinated with the mandarin community to educate its members on how to distinguish quality in mandarin produce. Another long-time grower indicated that he never misses a Mountain Mandarin Growers' Association meeting. He attends to ensure that "new guys do things right in freshness and packing. It is essential for the rest [of the group] to stay in the industry." In 2005, the growers' association began to develop a quality standards protocol. A committee from the association is working to finalize and implement the standards.

Secondly, nonmarket motives strengthen the growers' dedication to their own farms and the industry. The growers that were interviewed explained that the lifestyle provided by farming enables them to exercise a rural pace of life, express personal values with regard to the environment, and develop social connections with a like-minded community. One new grower reported enjoying a "very close relationship with the mandarin growers and other farmers." Another farmer indicated that he equates farming with "being able to see tangible benefits from your work." One farmer from one of the county's long-time farming families stated that he enjoys the work because of the

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Placer Grown Marketing Image of the Mandarin Industry.

“lifestyle, sense of place, and purpose” it provides. Despite the market challenges and pressures from land development, he remains a farmer because “leaving [his farm] would require a major change of life.” To afford the land required to establish a farm elsewhere, “he would have to go far way.” Indeed, since the attraction of new and experienced growers during the 1990s, no one has left the mandarin industry.

Signs of Trust

Rising levels of production due to the maturation of the industry’s trees set the stage for collaborative problem-solving based on trust. As an alternate bearing crop, mandarins bear heavy fruit every other year. By 2002, the maturation of trees planted during the early to mid-1990s and the growth in competition from new mandarin producers signaled to farmers that they could no longer “sit on the farm and wait for the product to be sold.” Institutional leaders and interested growers consequently began to consider an agritourism strategy to capture new markets. As a result, they decided to examine a model of agritourism from a neighboring county. Neft, Fake, Turner and approximately eight new and experienced growers traveled together to visit the model, meet with its key stakeholders, and consider opportunities for an agritourism strategy unique to the mandarin industry in Placer County. After returning from the study tour, significant signs of collaboration appeared within the grower community. The local growers, interested in introducing agritourism to the county, recognized that collective action was necessary.

They decided to meet regularly to develop and implement a plan. They carried this out by organizing monthly meetings over pizza to discuss their interests. By the end of 2003 these individuals founded the informal Mountain Mandarin Growers’ Association. The founders continued their meetings over pizza and transformed them into association gatherings open to the entire grower community.

The events of 2003 signaled a major change in the way mandarin farmers operated in the region. The manner in which farmers negotiated challenges and opportunities in production and marketing began to shift from independent to collaborative. After 2003, growers began to work with the UC Cooperative Extension and Placer County Agricultural Marketing Director to develop an innovative strategy to raise the competitiveness not just of their own farm, but of the entire grower community.

Cindy Fake, farm advisor at the UC Cooperative Extension, was instrumental in facilitating collaboration and trust by delivering group-centered services to the mandarin community. During her first encounters with the mandarin grower community in 2001, when she began her position, Fake found the group pessimistic about the future of the industry. In 2003, Fake worked with long-time growers to identify problems in farm production by surveying the grower community and conducting a needs assessment. Farmers indicated that pest management, one of Fake’s areas of expertise, was a problem. In response, she developed a seminar focusing on the topic and personally invited experienced growers to attend. While providing group-centered educational services, she also encouraged farmers to share knowledge and rely upon each other. As a result of her close connection to the group, she has become aware of the expertise of its members and is able to broker knowledge. When contacted by a grower with a question, she refers them to another grower that has the answer.

Shortly after the study tour the offering of group-centered seminars in 2003, Fake began to organize field meetings at growers’ orchards. In these field meetings, which continue to meet monthly six to eight times a year, the group focuses on a particular topic within the context of the orchard visited. During the visit, the owner of the orchard talks about his or her trees and discusses issues and concerns with the attendees. The topics have included irrigation practices, pest management, pruning, and orchard floor management. In response to current growers’ needs, recent workshops

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have focused on marketing. In the initial meetings between twelve to fifteen new and experienced growers attended. As the meetings over pizza and at orchards have continued, though, attendance has risen. Today, the attendance has reached 20 and above. One long-time grower in the region indicated that Fake's group-centered educational programs represent a change in the UC Cooperative Extension office's method of service delivery. In the past, UC farm advisors usually performed farm calls and assisted farmers individually.

Close interactions have created a trust that has facilitated new opportunities in production and marketing. Since the creation of the growers' association, farmers engage in collective purchasing for packing crates and parasitic wasps to combat pests. Depending on their production practices, some purchase pesticides and fertilizer together. Additional examples of collaboration include the group ownership of a trailer and the sharing of equipment. In my interviews of growers, all but one said that they rely on other farmers and others rely on them when farm problems arise. The farm advisor and agricultural commissioner describe these collaborative strategies implemented by farmers as an outgrowth of the UC Cooperative Extension's activities.

Intersectoral Linkages

Another key component of success has been the development of intersectoral linkages. Intersectoral linkages occur when expertise from a given industry is applied to engage in production activities in another industry sector (Pietrobelli & Rabellotti, 2004). In the mandarin industry, this has been exemplified by farmers' involvement in not only farm production, but tourism, the arts, and retail business activities. The examples below indicate how intersectoral linkages have provided the structure for a long-term upgrading strategy.

Joanne Neft, the Placer County Agriculture Marketing Director, has promoted a long-term goal of economic sustainability through agritourism. While her vision emerged in 1991, it wasn't until the heavy bearing year of 2002 that Placer County had the critical mass of mandarin growers and level of production necessary to galvanize the grower community to participate. In 2004 mandarin farmers worked with Neft and the Arts Council of Placer County to create the inaugural Mountain Mandarin Tour. The tour demonstrates how the industry is networking with tourism, business, and community groups in the region.

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It consists of a guidebook that lists local mandarin farmers that open their orchards to artists and the public during the weekends of the harvest season. At the orchards, artists from the community work and sell to visitors of the tour. The varieties of art include silk screenings, sculptural ceramics, metal sculpture, black and white ink drawings, and naked raku (Dice, 2005). The idea stems from Neft's greater vision of linking agriculture to tourism, heritage, and the arts. In a recent interview, Neft stated, "Frankly, arts and agriculture are appreciated by the same folks. People who enjoy eating in-season, freshly picked, wholesome local produce are the same ones who appreciate the visual arts, theatre, dance and music. Both arts and agriculture are substantial economic drivers in this region, so why not blend them? We are bringing the best of both worlds to Placer County" (Dice, 2005).

The festival and tour have generated strong linkages between mandarin growers and community members. The festival has woven the mandarin industry into local culture while the tour has connected its orchards with local residents. Many residents in the community, for instance, have developed a new tradition of visiting orchards during the harvest season and purchasing cases of mandarins to give as gifts during the holidays. Local farmers and institutional leaders agree that raising the cultural significance of agriculture to residents is critical to sustaining the industry. One farmer explained: "The tour helps people in the area realize that agriculture is located around the corner. It makes people aware and puts a face with a business."

Members of the business community have also recently become involved in agritourism. Joanne Neft facilitated the linkage. In the summer of 2005, Neft met with the Sierra Business Council (SBC), an organization that represents over 500 businesses, agencies, and individuals within California's 18-county Sierra Nevada region, and suggested that the council start a conversation within the business community to promote the development of an art, agriculture, and heritage tourism strategy in the Sierra Nevada region (Sierra, 2006). The SBC accepted the idea and promoted it, including it as a strand in their annual conference in October 2005. The session was attended by 80 people, including farmers, business owners, and vintners, as well as representatives from the hotel industry, arts community, and county government. Through this linkage with the SBC, small farmers in Placer County have the potential to expand marketing through regional and state-level agencies and attract investment by local businesses in art, agriculture, and heritage tourism.

As a result of recently formed intersectoral linkages, the mandarin industry now consists of a community of growers with deeper links to tourism, the arts, business, regional and state-level agencies, and local residents. These connections have enabled the industry to upgrade from exclusive commodity production into retail and tourism-based activities that produce services with an experiential value, incorporating cultural expression and heritage learning. Through this process, the county's agriculture has risen in cultural and economic prominence locally and in the state.

The Local Direct and Indirect Impacts

The development of small-scale agriculture since the early 1990s has resulted in an array of public amenities. The county's farmers' markets have increased the quality of public spaces, creating places where different members of the community interact. In addition, new community-based organizations have arisen, such as the Mountain Mandarin Growers' Association, promoting increased civic involvement. The direct marketing of mandarins has enriched the local culture, as evidenced by the region's festival and tour and new traditions related to the crop. For those opposed to the social, environmental, and health implications of large corporate farming practices, the presence of local orchards has also provided an alternative market whereby consumers can have greater control over the food that they eat. Finally, the expansion of mandarin orchards has increased scenic view sheds and preserved historic land uses in the traditionally agricultural region.

The mandarin industry provides the local community with direct and indirect economic benefits. The direct economic impacts from the industry relate to business earnings from farm production, which provides exclusive or supplemental sources of household income. Following the intervention of institutions, farmers have upgraded by entering into new activities.

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Scenes from the Mountain Mandarin Festival.

Farmers now engage in marketing, distribution, and retail. Simply stated, mandarin farmers do much more than farm. In some cases upgrading has resulted in new businesses that are located off the farm. Agricultural businesses have been created or expanded in the county during the period of 2000 to 2005, including three locally owned retail produce stores, a new packing shed, and a new tractor retail store and mechanic.

Farmers now competitively capture retail rather than wholesale prices in a variety of local outlets. In 2005, retail prices for mandarins set by the county's farmers at direct outlets ranged from \$1 to \$1.20 per pound. In contrast, wholesale prices set by distributors for higher quality mandarins such as those in Placer County were \$.60 per pound on average. Farmers are now able to receive retail prices at local market outlets such as the farmers' markets, festival, and tour. Growers also supplement these through supplier relationships with local schools, restaurants, retail markets, churches, regional brokers, and online customers.

In terms of indirect benefits, the mandarin growers support an array of local businesses through their operations. All but one of the local farmers interviewed reported that they purchase most of their inputs locally. Thus, purchasing from local farmers not only reduces spending leakages to non-local food producers, distributors and retailers, but also stimulates indirect economic impacts in other local agriculture-related businesses. Because the mandarin industry has increased consumer interest in Placer County agriculture and direct markets, it has anchored initiatives to market the county's agriculture industry-wide. As a result of the Mountain Mandarin Festival and the Mountain Mandarin Tour, the mandarin industry has created a new regional driver for tourism. Finally, by supporting local agriculture, the County has helped preserve quality of life attributes

that are important for attracting and retaining residents and businesses.

Conclusion

The mandarin industry demonstrates that economic development supports can sustain local agriculture in the most challenging of conditions. Instead of relying exclusively on land use policies and fiscal incentives, the Placer County government supported a variety of local institutions that provided specialized assistance in production and marketing, including the UC Cooperative Extension, the Placer County Agriculture Department, the Foothill Farmer's Market, and PlacerGROWN. By facilitating the development of various institutions, the Placer County Government has assisted stakeholders in organizing and specializing service delivery to farmers.

Collective efficiencies, trust, and intersectoral linkages have provided farmers with resources that have promoted the economic viability of the industry. The interactions of institutional leaders with local and non-local universities, consultant expertise, and small-scale farming experts have developed collective efficiencies in production and marketing knowledge. Their development of production workshops, association meetings, and regional branding and marketing initiatives have helped to develop trust among growers, resulting in a shift from individual to collaborative problem-solving and decision-making. Consequently, growers are dedicated not only to the performance of their own farms, but to the industry's regional competitiveness. Finally, the intersectoral linkages with tourism, the arts, and business have assisted in raising the industry's economic and social significance in the county.

In the last few years, several counties have investi-
(continued on page 17)

Planners in Economic Development

by Kaizer Rangwala, AICP

Planners attempt to balance a wider range of long-term community goals, while economic development professionals focus primarily on economic development goals. Economic development professionals often perceive planners as consummate bureaucrats that put up roadblocks of development processes and regulations on the avenue to prosperity. Planners often complain about the lack of communication and the short-sighted, quick fix approach by the economic development professionals. Are the two professions at odds against each other or are they performing in harmony for the common good of the society?

This examination profiles planners who are involved in economic development activities, highlights the differences and similarities between the two professions, explores if these distinctive job functions can be embodied in one person or department without conflicts, and discusses a few prevailing trends common to the two fields. A series of interviews with six planners who are also economic development professionals was conducted to learn more about these issues.

Meet Our Panelists

■ Thomas Chamberlain

Mr. Chamberlain is an Economic Development Representative with Memphis Light, Gas & Water (MLG&W) Division. He earned a Master's in City and Regional Planning from University of Memphis and a Bachelor's in Public Affairs from Indiana University. He has over eight years of experience in Economic Development with MLG&W. In addition, he has also worked in various large and small community development roles and has several years of other experience working in public works and other related departments at the local community level.

■ Jeanette M. Honermann

Ms. Honermann has 25 years professional public administration experience. Jeanette began her career in the federal government and quickly learned that local government offered the best opportunity to "make a difference." What began as an unglamorous permit clerk position culminated as the Director of Planning and Development services in a progressive San Antonio suburb. By day, Jeanette is currently an economic development analyst for CPS Energy in San Antonio, Texas and on the weekends, she enjoys NASCAR and travel.

■ Kimberly Jones

Miss Jones is an assistant planner for the City of Lockport. Recent turnover has her serving as the City's economic development director where her main focus is business retention and expansion as well as attracting new businesses to the City's expanding boundaries.

■ Dr. Ned Murray, AICP

Dr. Murray, AICP has over 20 years of professional and academic experience in urban planning and economic development. He received his Doctorate in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. He has authored numerous articles and papers on urban planning and economic development. At Florida International Institute his current research focus is on urban economic development research in the Miami area.

■ Frank Turner, FAICP

Mr. Turner is Executive Director of the Development Business Center for the City of Plano, Texas. He coordinates the center's management team, which is responsible for conducting the city's planning, engineering, building and property standards programs. He has coordinated the city's revitalization of downtown Plano into a vibrant, transit-oriented village. Mr. Turner earned

Are planning and economic development at odds against each other, or are they performing in harmony for the common good of the society? Six planners who are also economic development professionals have their say...

a B.S. degree from Lambuth University and a M.A. degree from the University of Memphis. He joined the City of Plano in 1984 as Planning Director and was appointed Executive Director in 1998.

■ Steven Winter

Mr. Winter is a Senior Project Director in a regional planning agency that serves a large urban metropolis. His professional background includes teaching, curriculum development, and 25 years of experience in building, transforming, and operating non-profit organizations. In his current role, Mr. Winter is developing new cross-sector partnerships that address regional issues such as employment transportation, workforce development, suburb-to-suburb transportation, and economic development.

Forum Discussion

Are planning and economic development goals alike?

NED: The goals should be compatible because ideally both planning and economic development goals should emanate from a community plan that establishes a clear vision with complementary and achievable long- and short-term goals and objectives. However, I have typically seen economic development detached from planning within the organizational framework of local and state governments resulting in a fragmented delivery of services. Additionally, planners are often not in positions of authority in economic development organizations. Economic development will always be results-driven and strongly influenced by local politics and private development interests. Planners need to be players in these discussions and negotiations to ensure that short-term economic development strategies are compatible with the long-term vision of the community.

THOMAS: The planner's primary role is to establish the vision and the framework for the future. The Economic Development practitioner then needs to take that vision and apply it to ongoing projects within those pre-determined guidelines. The key is the open and continuous communication between the two profes-

sions, i.e., are they meeting periodically to see if the vision needs to be adjusted or if it is compatible with reality?

KIMBERLY: Planning is focused on the long-term, whereas economic developers can be myopic in their vision: trying to get rid of vacancies or empty land in order to create short term value, often with little regard whether the business fits in with the long-term plan of the City.

JEANNETTE: Both disciplines are often misunderstood and both are often necessarily interrelated to achieve the desired outcome.

STEVE: Outcomes from planning and economic development activities should create favorable conditions within which quality of life is enhanced. The end goals of the two fields are the same: to favorably affect the lives of those who live in our cities, towns, and regions.

FRANK: Planners have traditionally relied on zoning, subdivision regulations and capital improvements as the primary tools for implementing a comprehensive or general plan. Economic development programs, especially those targeted at redevelopment, are increasingly important tools used by planners. Planners in central cities and first ring suburbs are becoming entrepreneurs, creating catalysts for change. Planners must guard against being gatekeepers and arbitrarily defending plans instead of using them to aid decision-making. Economic development professionals must understand that their work must be directed to established community goals that extend beyond adding to the tax base. Bottom-line, planning and economic development are both important to building sustainable communities.

Do planners make good Economic Development professionals?

NED: Planners should be successful economic development professionals because they are uniquely trained
(continued next page)



“To be a successful economic development professional, one must vigorously show the high value-added that the planner brings to the job.”
— Dr. Ned Murray, AICP

and educated to understand how economic development must be coordinated and integrated with other planning functions including transit, affordable housing, capital improvement plans, environmental protection, and public infrastructure. These functions can be integrated in one department or agency, and, in fact, should be in order to avoid fragmentation.

As a former city planning and development director, my department was quite successful in implementing economic development goals and objectives. I believe much of this success was due to recognition by the city that economic development was an important function, and that in-house capacity was fundamental to the success of the city's economic development agenda. With this support in place the city and my department were able to develop good working partnerships with county and area economic development organizations. Roles were more clearly defined and resources more effectively utilized. I believe the planner, as an economic development professional, can provide important leadership and direction in the creation of working partnerships. However, planners must hone their negotiation skills and be willing and able to articulate the larger vision and goals of the community and how thoughtful economic development policies and strategies are keys to the successful implementation of the community's plan.

FRANK: Planners make excellent economic development professionals because of their broad education and analytical skill set. As with any specialization, new knowledge and skills must supplement those typically possessed by planners in order to be successful in economic development. A good understanding of the business side of development is essential to negotiation, but what business most desires is a professional who will champion their project through the approval process. This requires someone who is not only experienced and trusted, but is empowered to make projects happen.

KIMBERLY: As a planner, I have more knowledge of the parcel simply because most people come to the

planning department first. When I go into meetings with a prospect I can help explain the development process and talk about the property with a great amount of detail.

JEANNETTE: The basic form and function of planning and economic development can certainly cause a normal staffer to suddenly become bipolar! Still, it is possible to peacefully co-exist in most cases. Having the benefit of both sets of experience results in the planner's ability to fully understand and act upon economic development proposals with the long-term benefit in mind. Economic development choices must ultimately become more specific and more strategic and the planner is typically better trained in evaluating proposals in this manner. Additionally, because planners are often active in community level participation, the planners may have a higher credibility with the community as opposed to the economic development professional who is often not involved in the community processes necessary for land use.



“Economic development choices must ultimately become more specific and more strategic and the planner is typically better trained in evaluating proposals in this manner.”
— Jeanette M. Honermann

THOMAS: The planner who is ultimately successful in the economic development profession will need to adapt to a much quicker pace than in the typical government setting. Since the atmosphere is very action-oriented they will need the skills and ability to work under extreme deadlines, to multi-task and will

have very little time for detailed analysis or clear direction. Probably the biggest adjustment for most planners will be the importance of networking and communication on a regular basis. The economic development profession requires a lot of social activities and interaction which is something not found in the typical government or planning role. However, there are a lot of advantages to having a planning background. Probably the biggest asset the planner can bring is the knowledge of the overall development process. This really comes in to play on large complex projects both before and during the development process. The typical company disdains having to navigate the development process on their own and in many cases this expertise is lacking in most economic development departments.

STEVE: Planners whose primary focus is economic development can have deliverables that are time-sensitive and measurable. An experienced planner with multi-dimensional skills and abilities who is working in within a healthy organizational culture and understands the mission and operating principles of the private sector should be able to effectively address economic development issues.



“Planners come to their job with a strong sense of stewardship for their service area that is driven by an understanding that the creation of livable communities is within the possible, and therefore must be within the probable.”

— Steven Winter

What are the important Economic Development trends?

THOMAS: On the metropolitan level there are three major trends: speed, information and regionalism. The speed or time that you have to respond to projects continues to shrink. Just eight years ago we typically had a week or more to respond to project deadlines now that has been cut in half. The demand for information has skyrocketed in the last few years. Prospect surveys can now be in excess of 200 questions or 30 pages or more. This forces smaller communities to rely on other organizations because these responses require much more resources to be devoted to them. This will ultimately force regions to work more closely on a daily basis. We are also seeing more demand for both local information at the community level and the demand for maps and GIS-based information. A few years ago this was an advantage, now it has become a requirement. The trend towards regionalism is real because companies view areas as regions not as just cities or counties. To only represent a portion of the community really hurts the overall ability to attract a wide variety of projects as well as hinders the ability of a community to fully market itself outside the region to companies, site selectors, real estate brokers and investors.

NED: There are several important trends that have emerged or have continued to expand. First, there appears to be less of a focus on competition with surrounding states or even cities and more of a focus on building local capacity to compete within the larger global economy. This begins by developing a greater understanding of our local economies, a greater appreciation of the importance of industry retention and

expansion and more clearly defined competitive advantage strategies, including cluster development. Secondly, and in keeping with the prior trend, cities and counties are beginning to focus more on sustainable economic development policies and strategies and the targeting of resources to indigenous businesses and industries. Understanding

the specific needs of locally grown industries in terms of emerging markets, technologies and worker skills are key to these policies and strategies. And lastly, the growing recognition that sustainable economies and communities can only be attained when quality of life issues are made integral to a community’s economic development agenda. Quality of life within the eco-

“Probably the biggest asset the planner can bring [to the profession] is the knowledge of the overall development process.”

— Thomas Chamberlain



omic development context means a highly trained and educated workforce, good corporate citizens and a broad spectrum of housing choice and opportunity for local workers of all incomes.

STEVE: A clearly defined regional identity is required to remain competitive in a global economy. We can no longer think of sustainable competitive advantage being found in one city or town. Rather, competitive advantage is the synergy we get from collective assets.

(continued next page)

FRANK: Resource scarcity is a huge issue that we are just beginning to feel. Competition for energy, water, materials and skilled labor are just some of the factors reshaping cities and business...Electronic communication may well be underestimated in its impact on business patterns, especially in retailing and service delivery. Increasing energy cost will change the way people work, shop, learn and play...Changing demographics, including aging, formation of non-traditional households and ethnic diversity are changing markets and business practices.

JEANNETTE: I believe that the shifting demographics will have an important and significant influence on economic development. Declining birth rates, shrinking family size and longevity will re-direct resources to these areas and offer opportunities for change toward large-scale consumerism, more women in the workforce and longer employment. Another significant factor is the digital influence on site selection and development.

How does a planning background help respond to the trends?

THOMAS: The planning background helps give you a basic framework or understanding of the overall development process. It helps you work through the process and eliminate problems in the front end before they can become a major stumbling block to either the project or the company. It also gives you a baseline of understanding when dealing with specific projects and/or other local planning professionals who you rely on to assist you in responding to prospects and/or detailed project requirements.

JEANNETTE: During the last 20 years, planners have been exposed to a rapidly changing technology environment. Planners have used this trend to manage and



“Planners in central cities and first ring suburbs are becoming entrepreneurs, creating catalysts for change.”

— Frank Turner, FAICP

forecast many functional issues including water demand, transportation issues, workforce development and commercial development choices. Likewise, technology continues to influence how planners respond to a variety of issues ranging from the simple (notifications for hearings) to the more complex (site specific evaluations to include tree surveys, environmental hazards, and traffic generation).

FRANK: The knowledge and analytical skills of planners helps in understanding the impact and consequences of trends beyond those that are obvious. Identifying the latent effects of change, including the social and economic effects, is an area where planners

should possess an edge over many other areas of professional training.

“As a planner, I have more knowledge of the parcel simply because most people come to the planning department first.”

— Kimberly Jones



STEVE: Planners come to their job with a strong sense of stewardship for their service area that is driven by an understanding that the creation of livable communities is within the possible, and therefore must be within the probable. Every planner I work with is committed to social equity in planning processes and decision-making. Planners understand the power of commonly held information (data and GIS) to organize and unite constituencies. Planners, as professionals who manage complex technical information as a daily task, are seasoned and literate in the language of statistics. These are terrific assets to have when planning for regional economic development.

NED: A planning background provides several important skills and ways of thinking that are critical to successful economic development practice. Most importantly, it is the ability to view the community from a more holistic and integrated perspective. Understanding how the various functions of community inter-

PLANNERS IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONT. FROM P. 16

connect and grow together should be one of the greatest assets that the planner brings to the table. Another valuable asset of the planner is his/her negotiation skills. Negotiation skills are critical in economic development and many aspects of planning due to the fact that many of the issues we deal with are contentious, require community consensus-building and political support. Lastly, planners seem to have a special ability to perform in-depth study and analysis on various issues which is fundamental to sound economic development policy and practice. Good economic base studies require careful analysis and presentation of data and findings. Well-conceived economic base studies allow planners to present a more comprehensive understanding of economic development related issues to elected and appointed officials. To be a successful economic development professional, one must vigorously show the high value-added that the planner brings to the job.

The planning and economic development professions have always enjoyed a pluralistic incline attracting people from a wide array of backgrounds. While the diverse backgrounds make the field richer, polarizing

debates tend to make the professions weak.

Mark Gerzon author of *Leading through Conflict* notes that organizations and communities are more interested in inclusive, respectful, and continuous dialogue instead of a debate between two know-it-alls, each sure that the other person is wrong. "Dialogue does not seek closure as debates do, but rather discovers new options, says Gerzon.

The six people interviewed in this article understand the importance of creating alliances between the two professions. The crossover between the two professions can spur new approaches to creating sustainable communities, and potentially create breakthroughs that could not be achieved individually by either profession. ■

Kaizer Rangwala, AICP, has practiced planning for more than 18 years. After working for Jersey City, Indianapolis, and Farmers Branch, he now serves as the Assistant Community Development Director at City of Ventura. He holds a master's in architecture from New Jersey Institute of Technology and a master's in city and regional planning from Rutgers University.

PLANNING TO SUSTAIN SMALL FARMS, CONT. FROM P. 10

gated Placer County's model of direct marketing to explore policy options to preserve agriculture in their own regions. Some leaders from counties with strapped fiscal budgets discounted the program's feasibility for replication due to Placer County's positive state of fiscal health. Leaders in Placer County, however, argue that money has not been the most important determinant of success. Rather, they argue that small-scale farming and the mandarin industry in particular have grown because of the county's "people capital." Success has occurred due to the awareness of agencies and the capacity of growers to promote the willingness to trust and change.

Although fiscal and land use policies such as zoning, urban growth boundaries, preferential taxation and easements may prevent the development of farm-

land, they do not address the market challenges that may hinder its cultivation. As a result, such policy approaches offer only a partial remedy for a struggling agricultural sector. If local agriculture is valued by a community, county governments, community leaders, and farmers can promote economic viability by creating an institutional system of economic development supports that promote collective efficiencies, trust among growers, and intersectoral linkages. As evidenced by the mandarin industry in Placer County, this process involves the commitment of all stakeholders and the ability to identify and adapt to market opportunities and constraints in small-scale agriculture. ■

Editor's note: the complete essay, along with references, is available from the author at janellesantos@gmail.com.

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Ohio State University Receives the 2006 Excellence in Economic Development Award for Planning Assistance in Harrison County, Mississippi

by Jennifer Evans-Cowley, PhD, AICP

The Economic Development Division of the American Planning Association has awarded Ohio State University with its 2006 Excellence in Economic Development Award for Planning Assistance in Harrison County, Mississippi. The award was made at the APA national convention in San Antonio in April.

Harrison County, Mississippi sustained substantial damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina. While the Mississippi Renewal Forum (www.mississippirenewal.com) reached out to assist communities along the Mississippi Gulf Coast to plan for rebuilding, unincorporated towns in the area were largely left out of the recovery planning efforts. In response, Harrison County invited Ohio State University to bring a technical assistance team to work with unincorporated areas of the county.

"We wanted to reach out to the residents, property and business owners in the unincorporated areas to hear their ideas for rebuilding their local economies," said Patrick Bonck, Harrison County Zoning Administrator. "A lot has been accomplished in the rebuilding effort and it is important for our unincorporated areas to play a part as well."

The County Board of Supervisors selected the communities of DeLisle (pop. 1,300) and Saucier (pop.

12,000) to draft community plans to revise sections of their zoning ordinances. Based on the Board's request, a technical assistance team was formed. The team included a professor, three planning professionals and twelve students.

During the month of December 2005, the team worked with Harrison County to collect background information and prepare to meet with the communities. The technical assistance team arrived in Harrison

County on January 1, 2006. The team toured the communities and began collecting data. As part of the planning process, town hall meetings were held in each community. "We believe citizen input is vital to the process of rebuilding," Bonck said. "We know the task before us is enormous. This is a chance for any community member in DeLisle and

Saucier to be heard and to play a direct role in the future of his/her community."

The citizen participation process didn't end with the town hall meeting, but was just a first step in the planning process. To continue the dialogue from a distance, the team established a "1-800" number to record citizen comments and questions. Additionally, the team established an online discussion community.



The County Board of Supervisors assisted in forming community steering committees to provide feedback to the planning team throughout the process. The team developed a newsletter that is distributed to the community members to update them on the planning process.

The planning team returned to Harrison County between March 19-22 to hold more town hall meetings focused on finalizing the plan and empowering the citizens to implement the community plans.

The Community Plan for Saucier was selected for the 2006 Excellence in Economic Development Planning because of its rapid response to the economic concerns of the community. This community of 12,000 has more than 60 percent of its population commuting more than 30 minutes to work. There is a lack of employment opportunities in the community. With an influx of citizens from the coast moving to this community that is further inland, the commute times are only expected to increase. The community recognized the need to create employment opportunities, especially in the downtown area to help prevent further sprawl. Additionally, the community faced the threat of a new highway running through the west side of the community. By closely working with the highway department,

the Saucier citizens were able to persuade the Mississippi Department of Transportation that there were other route alternatives that have not been considered that would protect Saucier and provide adequate evacuation routes.

While the community plans are important, implementation is critical. Immediately following the creation of the plan, the community created the Saucier Improvement Association. The first meeting had 75 people attend and the second meeting with the Mississippi Department of Transportation had 250 people in attendance. The improvement association is working on establishing a farmer's market, coordinating with the state-level water/sewer authority, and talking to local officials about development issues critical to the plan. This community's first experience with planning was strongly embraced and the community is working together to implement the plan to build a stronger economy, while maintaining its rural character.

Ohio State University's planning effort is ongoing. Through a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, OSU will continue working with Harrison County through 2008. For more information of these planning efforts visit www.co.harrison.ms.us/departments/zoning/downloads.asp. ■

Welcome to Our New Members...

Stephen P. Allen	Quincy, CA	Will F. Faust	Encampment, WY	Kenneth N. Margolin	Newton, MA
Junnosuke Ando	Silver Spring, MD	Fernando Feliciano-aguiar	Toa Alta, PR	Michael Moran	Portland, OR
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We invite you to learn more about the Economic Development Division of APA at our website: www.planning.org/economic.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

August 16-17, 2006

Entrepreneurial and Small Business Development Strategies, Sarasota Springs, New York
www.nysedc.org

August 16, 2006

The Basics of Business Development in the A/E/C Marketplace, Hollywood, CA: Society for Marketing Professional Services; www.smeps.org/interestgroups/06bdibrochure.pdf

September 7-8, 2006

Business Retention and Expansion, Louisville, Kentucky, Galt House Hotel; www.iedconline.org/Training_Registration.html

September 17-20, 2006

IEDC Annual Conference, New York, Marriott Marquis; www.iedconline.org/AnnualConference/index.html

September 28-30, 2006

Urban Waterfronts 24: Celebrating 20 Years of Excellence on the Waterfront Center, Portland, Oregon; www.waterfrontcenter.org

October 24, 2006

Managing Economic Development Organizations, East Syracuse, New York; www.iedconline.org/?p=Training_Managing_NY

October 24-27, 2006

National Conference on Cultivating Creative Communities: Local Solutions for Global Success, Partners for Livable Communities, Charlotte, North Carolina; www.creativeconf.org/home.shtml

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