***Legislative Updates - Eastern Riverside County***

Updated August 2014

**City of Blythe**

* Reported only 2 residential permits pulled in 2013. Only 1 single family residential permit pulled in first five months of 2014.
* Has an Interim City Manager, Frank Luckino. The Assistant City Manager is also ‘Interim”.

**City of Cathedral City**

* Reported 10 single family residential permits pulled in 2013. Nine permits have been pulled in the first 5 months of 2014.
* The process for the annexation of Thousand Palms continues.
* The Date Palm Interchange at Interstate 10 is finally complete.
* Measure B: The Cathedral City Continuation of Fiscal Stability/Local Control Measure. Maintains a 1% sales tax. The voters overwhelmingly approved the extension of the tax on the June Ballot.

**City of Coachella**

* Reported pulling 108 single family residential permits in 2013. 45 of which were pull in June 2014. This appears to be an attempt to beat the July 1 fee increases. Nothing recorded by CIRB for 2014 although we are assured that construction is occurring.
* The City closed the public comment period regarding the General Plan Update last August/September (2013)
  + DVBA submitted a list of comments and concerns relating to housing costs should the Plan be adopted as is.
  + Staff has advised that they share some of those same concerns and are working on potential changes
  + Formal responses to written comments from the public and DVBA have **not** been provided
  + Considering public comments and the recently approved specific plan for the La Entrada project, the City will Re-Produce the New General Plan.
* General Plan (UpDate 2014) made public with 45 day review/comment period ending Mid-August
  + The original document wasn’t edited; provided an Errata for changes made.
  + Responses to previous public comments found on General Plan Up Date Website.
  + DVBA is in process of formalizing comments for submission prior to the deadline.
* The City stands out as the only Coachella Valley city that has not provided an Annual AB1600 Development Impact Fee Report (several years).
  + Per recent discussions with staff, they will start work on this in the near future. As of August 1st we are still waiting. Now the 2012-2013 report is 8 months late.
* Two council seats and the mayoral position will be on November’s Elections Ballot. Mayor Eduardo Garcia looks to be the front runner to replace the termed-out Assemblyman V. Manuel Perez for the 56th Assembly District. It appears that Councilman Steven Hernandez and freshman Councilwoman Magdalena Zepeda are vying for the Mayor’s seat. Rumors report former councilmember Carmen Manriquez may enter that race as well. We have not heard whether or not Councilman Emmanuel Martinez will seek re-election. No other council candidates for the two seats have been made public.

**City of Desert Hot Springs**

* Reported 1 single family residential permit pulled in 2013. None for 2014 through May.
* The City is in the midst of yet another Fiscal Crisis. They have slashed salaries across the board; including Police and Fire personnel.
* Ballot Measure F, an 1151% increase to parcel taxes on vacant land, was on the June 3rd ballot. A violation of fair taxation laws. **Measure F failed** at the polls.
* The City needs to develop back-up/alternate funding plans, which will probably include a sales tax increase.
* Complications in the hiring process caused the Council to look within, and chose Martin Magana as the new City Manager.
* As of late July the Finance Manager has resigned to take a more secure position with a local water agency.

**City of Indian Wells**

* Total of 14 residential units permitted in 2013 with a valuation of $5mil. However, 16 permits have been pulled in the first 5 months of 2014, for a valuation of more than $6.5 million.
* The Tennis Garden expansion was opened on time for the BNP Paribas Tennis Tournament, setting an event record in attendance.
* Council Members Mary Roche and Patrick Mullany terms are up in December. Council member Roche has stated that she will not seek re-election.

**City of Indio**

* A total of 348 residential units permitted in 2013 with a valuation of $59.4 mil.
* 216 were pulled in the first five months of 2014.
* Three council seats will be on November’s ballot with Mayor Michael Wilson, Councilmembers Sam Torres and Elaine Holmes four year terms ending. It is our understanding that each is seeking re-election.

**City of La Quinta**

* Reported pulling 117 single family residential permits in 2013.
* 52 single family residential permits were pulled in the first five months of 2014.
* Working on a new electronic development/plan processing system with the goal of faster processing starting in August/September
* The mayor and 2 council seats are slated for elections in November. The seats of council members Terry Henderson and Linda Evans are termed. Councilwoman Henderson has announced that she is not seeking re-election while Councilwoman Linda Evans has opted to run for the Mayoral seat. Mayor Don Adolph has yet to announce whether or not he will seek re-election.
* We expect a large cast of candidates for these open positions based on the turnout of previous elections.
  + Patrick Swarthout was the first to publically announce his intentions of running for the City Council.
* Land-use and services fees will increase per CPI (1.42%) on September 15th (60 day implementation period).

**City of Palm Desert**

* Reported 138 single family residential building permits pulled in 2013.
* 116 single family residential permits have been pulled through May 2014.
* November’s city council elections include the seats of decades-long councilwoman Jean Benson and first-term Jan Harnick. While Ms. Harnick will run for re-election, Madam Benson has stated that she is completing her final term on the City Council.
* Sabby Jonathan, a previous candidate for council, has already thrown his hat into the ring.

**City of Palm Springs**

* Reported 152 single family residential building permits pulled in 2013.
* 69 have been pulled in the first five months of 2014.

**City of Rancho Mirage**

* Reported 49 single family residential building permits pulled in 2013, averaging a $432,950 valuation.
* 19 single family residential permits have been added through May 2014 with a $7.5 million in valuation.
* The City’s elections were done and over in April, with Dana Hobart holding onto his seat and Ted Weill (previously appointed) and Charles Townsend with their first election wins.
* The best news for the City was the opening of the Ritz-Carlton in May.
* They would like to remind you that the restaurants at the Ritz-Carlton are open to the public.

**County of Riverside**

* Reporting that the unincorporated regions of the County pulled 721 permits for single family residential buildings. We don’t have the breakdown for those built in the eastern region of the county including the Coachella Valley and Blythe.
* 355 for first 5 months of 2014.
* Back in April (2013) we reviewed the County Development Impact Fee Study
  + All fees in the Coachella Valley were decreasing by approximately 29%
  + Do to internal issues the County has yet to take action
  + The earliest this study and respective fee schedule will be publically discussed is January 2014
* Meanwhile (September 10, 2013), the Board of Supervisors has reduced the existing fee schedule by 50% again(Retro-active back to July1, 2013) , with requirement that the DIF update be brought to the Board of Supervisors “no later” than January 2014
* The new Development Impact Fee has been provided and reviewed. (2014)
  + Fees for residential construction have all gone down in Eastern Riverside County
  + Commercial fees have increased from previous assessment, however they are reduced significantly from the study produced a year ago
  + Adoption is expected in late April and will include a recommendation for phasing in new fees as the current rate is 50% of what the previously adopted study stated was a reasonable fee/rate.
  + The Board of Supervisors have pulled this item from any upcoming agendas due to the upcoming elections.
  + The adoption has been delayed again over an issue of jail beds. Adoption is expected September 9th.

**Coachella Valley Water District**

* Advocating for a more moderate Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Chromium-6 – HAS FAILED!!!
  + - DVBA has written an Op-Ed in support of their position as well submitted a letter to CDPH
    - Form letter was provided to DVBA members
  + On April 15th the State of California became the first state in the nation to regulate Chromium-6, 10 parts per billion (ppb).
  + Under California rules this standard became effective July1, 2014 with quarterly inspections showing progress to complete compliance within 12 months. Within 6 months, fines for compliance violations are expected for CVWD and other water districts.
  + The District and our local state representatives are working at the State Capitol on legislation or other rule changes that allow the implementation of State regulations to mirror those of the federal government regulation implementation processes.
* AB 1896 (V.M. Perez) the District has requested additional language to an existing law requiring HOAs in the CVWD territory to connect to non-potable sources when reasonable for use in common areas.
  + There has been a great deal of discussion regarding what is, and who determines what is reasonable.
  + DVBA has submitted a letter of support.
* Three District Seats are up for election this November.
  + District 1 – Franz DeKlotz
  + District 3 – John Powell Jr.
  + District 5 – Debi Livesay

**Mission Springs Water District**

* Reports that CV Integrated Regional Water Management group has submitted for and awarded a $5.4 million grant for water quality improvements throughout the valley
* The District has gathered data related to I-10 and Indian Canyon area to determine if the formation of either an assessment or community facility district is warranted to spur growth activity in this corridor and deal with future infrastructure needs.

**Desert Water Agency**

* Probably the only major water district in the Coachella Valley not to be affected by the new Chromiun-6 standard.

**Valley Sanitary District**

* The District will NOT be increasing the Connection Capacity Fee this year (2014)
* The fee will remain at $4,265/EDU

***Legislative Updates - Imperial Valley***

**City of Brawley**

* Reported only 9 single family residential building permits issued in 2013.
* 22 permits have been pulled through May of this year.
* The City contends that they only collect $500 per acre as an Annexation Fee and has established that this fee predates the Mitigation Fee Act. However, the City Fee Schedule displays an Annexation fee as $500+$6,630, which increased from $500 + 4,753 a year earlier.
  + We have requested detailed information into the development of this fee and questioned its legality
  + We have a public records request in with Imperial County LAFCO for additional information
* We have submitted a public records request for their AB1600 Annual and Five Year Reportable Fees Reports.
  + We have received one report that combines the years of 2006 to 2010.
  + They are requesting RFP/FQs for firms to bring the City current

**City of Calexico**

* Reported 10 single family residential building permits issued in 2013.
* As of June 1, 2014 only 2 single family residential construction permits have been pulled.
* As usual we don’t receive any required documents form this city
  + We are looking into alternative means of compliance
* We have submitted a public records request for their AB1600 Annual and Five Year Reportable Fees Reports.
  + We have received a phone call from a new staffer that stated they would be working on providing the required annual reports. No time frame has been given.
* Two councilmembers are up for re-election challenges come November: Bill Hodges and Maritza Hurtado.

**City of Calipatria**

* Reported that zero single family residential building permits were issued in 2013.
* Recently met with city manager – his comment, “…not a whole lot of activity in this city.”

**City of El Centro**

* Reported only 1 single family residential building permit issued in 2013. However, the city kept busy with commercial construction and tenant improvements.Deferral of fees to the CFO has been extended an additional 2 years, and to be reviewed on a case by case basis.
* New Businesses: Harbor Freight, Dollar General and Papa John’s
* 5 residential single family construction permits have been pulled through May 2014.
* Dogwood Interchange – work is commencing

**City of Holtville**

* Reported zero single family residential building permits for 2013.
  + They claim to have residential construction. However, it is not getting reported properly to CIRB – Construction Industry Research Board.
* The formation of a public/private partnership has broken ground on a new detention center which will provide approximately 200+ new jobs to the region. Detainees are currently housed in Sacramento and must be transported back to the region for court appearances. Completion of this project will provide significant cost savings to state tax payers.
  + The construction is complete. Currently, in negotiations with Government Agencies for contractual use agreement.
* The City has adopted, with input from DVBA, a reduction of fees in a number of categories in an effort to attract business and interest in residential development. Contact City Manager Alexander Myerhoff for specific information or review fee schedule on city website: <http://www.holtville.ca.gov>
* The City has requested that DVBA start the Directional Sign Program for the new projects in the City. This is the first City to request our involvement in directing new home buyer traffic to a city.
* We have submitted a public records request for their AB1600 Annual and Five Year Reportable Fees Reports.
  + The response was not positive in nature. What they have, is, what they have. This not a direct quote. But, it sums up the staffer’s response.

**City of Imperial**

* Reported 62 single family residential building permits in 2013.
* City staff has finally returned to city hall after nearly 3 years following the Easter Sunday April 4th, 2010 earthquake center near Mexicali, Baja California.
* We have submitted a public records request for their AB1600 Annual and Five Year Reportable Fees Reports.
  + We have received several years of reports, however, some basic information was missing, making the reports unusable in their current state.
  + We have requested information and clarification.

**County of Imperial**

* Reported 4 single family residential building permits issued in 2013.
* No residential single family building permits have been requested in the first five months of 2014.
* We have submitted a public records request for their AB1600 Annual and Five Year Reportable Fees Reports.
  + The last report we received from the City was for fiscal year 2005/2006.
  + The report had several problems with accuracy and proper documentation
  + We never received a corrected version.
  + He have received newer attempts at the Annual Report. They were mostly complete however, we have requested modifications and additional information for future reports.
* November elections will be the seats for District 1, John Renison and District 5, Raymond Castillo. Daniel F. Romero survived the Primary Elections in June for District 1, as well as, did Wally Leimgruber for District 5.

**City of Westmorland**

* Reported zero single family residential building permits issued in 2013.
* There still hasn’t been any building activity in 2014.

**Other Imperial Valley Agencies**

**Heber Public Utilities District**

**Imperial Irrigation District**

* SB 1139 (Hueso and Co-authored by V.M. Perez) will add geothermal renewable energy plants to be a required source for renewable energy in meeting state regulations for the Renewables Portfolio Standard.
  + The Bill continues to move along. There has been opposition by CalChamber and others about its potential to increase energy costs. But, that was already done by the original adopted bills.

**Seeley County Water District**