

Robert M. Weygandt, the Placer County Supervisor whose district includes Placer Ranch, and F.C. “Rocky” Rockholm, the Supervisor who represents most of Roseville, are responding to the Nov. 17 editorial “Who owns the ranch? / Supervisor should cede on Placer Ranch.”

By Robert M. Weygandt and F.C. “Rocky” Rockholm

The Bee made some valid points about Roseville’s vote to consider annexing Placer Ranch but mistakenly portrayed the county as a bad guy. Nothing could be further from the truth. The editorial missed two critical issues that are important for the public to understand.

First, Placer Ranch would need a substantial annual subsidy whether it is developed in unincorporated Placer County or the city of Roseville. A subsidy is needed because the project would feature a campus of California State University, Sacramento planned to accommodate 25,000 students.

It is important to understand the university and its students would need law enforcement and other services, but the university would not generate enough revenue to offset the costs because public universities do not pay property taxes, the main revenue source for cities and counties.

We believe strongly the public should be aware of the issue because Placer County residents have a direct stake in how the subsidy is handled.

The Roseville City Council did not address the issue before deciding to proceed, and city staff overlooked it by eliminating the university from its initial fiscal analysis.

The second critical issue is the council vote could shatter the Sunset Industrial Area, which Placer County created years ago to generate high-wage jobs and fund county services. Roseville has historically stated publicly it had no interest in the industrial area.

Forty percent of the area is within Placer Ranch and would be removed from the county’s Sunset Industrial Area strategic plan if Roseville annexes the project.

For four years, Placer County worked to develop a comprehensive plan for Placer Ranch, taking into account Roseville’s concerns. Without

notice, developers turned to Roseville based on the startling assumption the city can provide services for one-fifth of the cost to the county. That assumption is not supported by county and city fiscal analyses, and cannot be reconciled with the county's quality, cost-effective planning in areas such as Granite Bay and the Sunset Industrial Area.

About 5,000 jobs have been created and 45,000 more are projected by 2050. The area gives the county a solid tax base, which is critical to cities and unincorporated areas alike. Countywide programs include health, mental health, election, child-protection and restaurant-inspection services.

We will continue to follow Placer Ranch and work to see the process is fair and transparent to taxpayers. The public should expect nothing less.