

EDC lax in getting consultants to disclose info

By Lake Tahoe News

Consultants hire by El Dorado County have a habit of not abiding by state law that requires them to disclose financial interests.

This could be a problem if consultants have competing financial interests that lead to illegal favors.

The county's Community Development Agency was singled out in a letter that auditor Joe Harn sent to the Board of Supervisors.

"The county's land use planners are required to make public financial disclosures of their income, gifts received, etc. Consultants that CDA uses and relies on to make land use recommendations are required by state law to make the same disclosures. The county and CDA have not been asking for the required disclosures," Harn wrote.

CAO Don Ashton believes the problem should be resolved now.

"I recommended the board amend a contract to identify the auditor as the contract administrator for a consultant providing financial impact analysis studies for the Community Development Agency. As a result of this recommendation, Mr. Harn identified this error and between the CAO's office and the auditor-controller's office, we will take appropriate corrective action to educate our staff, correct any deficiencies, and prevent this from occurring in the future," Ashton told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Harn wants all county consulting contracts to be reviewed to make sure they are in compliance.