



**JOHN PAUL
THE GREAT**
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

March 9, 2018

Carolina Ilic
Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

On behalf of John Paul the Great Catholic University, please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. We own/occupy 3 buildings on Grand Ave and are very much concerned for the smart growth improvements to our city.

Grand Avenue is the heart of Escondido's historical downtown. It has seen much transformation over the past century, reinventing itself as Escondido has grown. It remains the central place where people meet, dine and shop. Traffic chokes Grand Avenue and the community has developed a new concept for downtown. The vision includes wider sidewalks, narrowing Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, out-door dining, landscaping and enhancing the downtown brand.

Incremental change has, in recent years, improved livability - creating amenities and fostering a greater sense of place. A positive business atmosphere has attracted new businesses, including our university, creating jobs and great shopping experiences. Great improvements have been made along Maple Street and the Mercado to create public spaces where people can gather. The Grand Avenue Complete Streets improvement project will bring more of these improvements. The project will activate outdoor space, calm traffic, and encourage people to spend more time downtown.

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the final planning and implementation of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan. John Paul the Great Catholic University supports the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant application.

Thank you for your consideration. If you require anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Derry Connolly
President

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Chairman of the Board
Insurance & Investments

Linda Bailey
Immediate Past Chair
Community Strategies Group

Kristen Steinke
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Lounsbury Ferguson Altona & Peak, LLP

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Glenn Torrez
Prava Construction Services, Inc.

Jerry Van Leeuwen
*California Center for the Arts,
Escondido*



City Council
201 N Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

RE: Grand Ave Vision Plan

Dear Mayor Abed and Council Members Masson, Diaz,
Gallo and Morasco,

Grand Ave is the gem of Escondido and the envy of North County. With its historic charm and unique shopping and dining opportunities, polishing this gem and improving the appearance and function will only add to its attraction value.

The Escondido Chamber of Commerce trusts that the City Council will recognize the hard work and planning that has gone into preparing the Grand Avenue Vision Plan and will approve this plan and authorize the Director of Engineering Services, Julie Procopio, or her designee to complete applications to SANDAG for the Smart Growth Incentive Program, and if awarded, authorize the Director of Engineering Services to accept grant funds, complete grant documents on behalf of the City, and process necessary budget adjustments.

A vibrant downtown will ensure our merchants have the best opportunity for business success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rorie Johnston', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Rorie Johnston
CEO

Karen Youel

From: Don Zech <dzech@cdccommercial.com>
Sent: Friday, March 09, 2018 5:21 PM
To: Karen Youel
Subject: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications

On behalf of CDC Commercial Inc., please accept this email as a sign of support for Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. I am a commercial real estate broker and owner of one of most active commercial real estate companies in Escondido. I also grew up in Escondido. Additionally, I have been involved with the Grand Avenue Vision Plan. More importantly, as a broker I have leased, sold and prospected for tenant', buyers and users to bring to downtown. I have also and continue to be involved in the sale and or lease of 3-12 properties down town at any given time (have about 6 listings there at this time). I have also been involved directly with the expansion and growth of Classical Academy and was the broker of record bringing John Paul the Great to downtown.

In my position, I also get the flack for the downsides of Escondido. I hear when the tenant's complain or why the prospects won't lease or buy. As such, I have been a long time advocate of eliminating parallel parking and going to herring bone throughout downtown. I also have advocated to one lane in each direction with the elimination of the center median (perhaps a middle turn lane). 2nd and Valley are meant to carry the traffic. Traffic on grand needs to be pedestrian and slow vehicular with easy parking.

I have also preached that for downtown to be successful you need to have jobs and housing downtown. The hosing is finally coming. The jobs are slow but starting to happen (I don't mean retail or services – I mean white collar 6 figure jobs). Jobs and rooftops contribute to successful retail. A positive business atmosphere has encouraged new businesses to become established in the area, creating jobs and great shopping experiences. Improvements have been made along Maple Street and the Mercado to create great spaces where people can gather. The Grand Avenue Complete Streets improvement project will bring more of these improvements to Downtown.

Finally, as I mentioned, I regularly speak with prospects trying to get them to buy, lease, move or develop downtown. What I can tell you is that in the last 12 -18 months, the buzz has changed. No longer do people say no to downtown. Instead they see the vision. I hear people now say it is the North Park of North County.

Again, we at CDC Commercial Inc., support the City of Escondido and the Smart Growth grant application.

Don Zech | Lic. #00885909
CDC Commercial Inc. | Lic. #01857155
11440 W Bernardo Ct. Suite 300
San Diego, Ca. 92127
Dir. 858.486.9999
www.cdccommercial.com

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Karen Youel

From: Gil Miltenberger <gmiltenberger@integralcommunities.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 2:50 PM
To: Karen Youel
Cc: Ninia Hammond
Subject: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

Hello Karen, please find our email concerning the Grand Avenue Grant.

Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

On behalf of Integral Communities, please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. Integral Communities is one of the most active developer builders in California, and we have a significant presence in San Diego County; Palomar Station is a 370 unit apartment project in San Marcos, and 380 unit project in Oceanside called Mission Lane, The Marke is located in Santa Ana with 300 luxury units, The George is a 340 luxury apartment project in Anahiem, CA. More specifically in Escondido we are breaking ground on a 126 unit transit-oriented project called Gateway Grand. Also, we have been selected as the developer of the 14 acre Palomar Health Hospital site in Escondido connected to historic downtown via Grand Avenue.

Grand Avenue is the heart of historical downtown Escondido and is a critical element to the success of the downtown revitalization. The new concepts for Grand Avenue and downtown are important to Integral Communities as we build Gateway Grand and our future plans for the mixed-use development at the Palomar Health Hospital site. Since both the hospital site and the future plans of Grand Avenue go hand in hand it is important that the City receive this grant for the remagination of downtown. The City of Escondido's business friendly environment and plans to reinvigorate downtown with great spaces and bike and pedestrian friendly streetscapes makes this new project especially exciting.

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the final evolution of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan and help it come into fruition. Integral Communities supports the City of Escondido's vision for downtown and these Smart Growth grant applications.

Thank you for your consideration for this much needed project.

Gil Miltenberger, VP
Integral Communities
2235 Encinitas Blvd, suite 216
Encinitas, CA 92024
760-944-7511 o
760-519-6145 c

GREG DANSKIN ARCHITECT

Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications:
Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

Please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application.

I have been involved with the City of Escondido in various capacities since 1994, when my wife and I decided to make our home here. I have run my architecture business from Escondido since that time, and have had the opportunity to create several projects on Grand Avenue. Membership on the Escondido Design Review Board, Downtown Business Association Design Advisory Committee, the Downtown Specific Plan Committee, and most recently the Escondido Historic Preservation Commission, has given me the opportunity to see over time the importance of Grand Avenue to the whole of Escondido.

Grand Avenue has always been the center of Escondido, and has been transformed as the city has grown and changed with the times. The Grand Avenue Experience is important to the citizens of Escondido, and, rather than detracting from the other important parts of the city, serves to bolster the whole, and is one important public space that gives Escondido its regional identity.

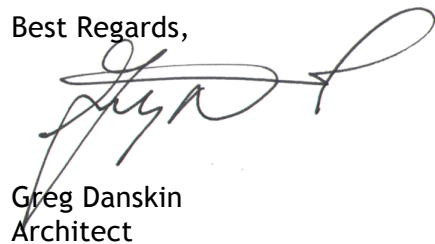
As Escondido continues to change, the positive elements of increased housing, new academic and business opportunities, and the general increase in mobility of the culture, have all contributed to increased pressure on Grand Avenue with increased traffic and vehicular congestion. The Grand Avenue Complete Streets improvement project will address this in a way that will allow Grand Avenue to reach its potential as a Great Street, one in which the community will enjoy in a way they presently are not able to.

The improvements outlined in the plan, of changes to parking, vehicular and bicycle travel, pedestrian safety, dining and gathering spaces, and visual unification of the scene, all work together to this end. It is an ambitious project, one ripe for the times, and one I wholeheartedly support.

I support the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant applications, and look forward participating in the successful execution of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan.

Thank you for your consideration for this much needed project.

Best Regards,



Greg Danskin
Architect



Bike Walk Escondido
c/o Escondido Education COMPACT
220 S. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025
(760)839-4515

March 13, 2018

Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications:
Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

Dear Ms. Ilic:

On behalf of ***Bike/Walk Escondido Committee*** please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. Bike/Walk Escondido Committee was established in 2012, under the partnership of Escondido Education COMPACT, Circulate San Diego, the San Diego Bike Coalition, County of SD, HHSA and Escondido Police Department Traffic Division as well as youth and adult bicycle and/or walking enthusiast's. The mission of Bike/Walk Escondido Committee is to ensure that bicycling and walking in Escondido is both enjoyable and safe. The committee meets on a monthly basis to talk about needed sidewalk, crosswalk and bike lane improvements. The committee has been instrumental in making recommendations to the City of Escondido, Transportation Commission regarding projects to be placed on the City's "Transportation Priority List" with a specific emphasis of safety around schools and the Escondido Creek Trail. The Bike/Walk Escondido Committee also worked with the City of Escondido on the "Missing Link" grant that connects the Escondido Creek Trail to the North County Transit Center and the regional Inland Rail Trail.

The City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program that focuses on the improvement to the downtown Grand Avenue corridor is exactly the type of project that the Escondido Bike/Walk Committee supports. The program vision includes wider sidewalks, narrowing Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, outdoor dining, landscaping and enhancing the downtown brand. Bike/Walk Escondido Committee has coordinated both walking and biking activities on the Grand Avenue corridor to increase resident visitation to the area.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant application.

Very truly yours,

Carolina Plancarte
Bike/Walk Escondido Committee, Facilitator

Ms. Carolina Ilic
Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA 92101

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand avenue
Complete Streets Improvement Project

Dear Ms. Ilic:

Please accept this letter in support of the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application for the Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project. I was recently privileged to participate in a community advisory committee for the revitalization of the Escondido Downtown. As both a resident of Escondido and as a business person with an interest in active transportation, I was thrilled to see the City take the initiative to bring complete street concepts to Grand Avenue.

The Grand Avenue corridor is at the cultural center of the City, linking the Civic Center, Center for the Fine Arts, the Escondido Transit Center, the City library, and other activity centers. Although originally developed to carry traffic through the commercial center of the city, Grand Avenue is no longer needed to carry the heavy traffic volumes which now can use the one way street pair of Valley Parkway and Second Street to move through the area. The Downtown stakeholders and other interested members of the community have recognized that there is a need to transform Grand Avenue from the old auto-oriented street to a street that enhances the pedestrian safety and mobility. The elements of the Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project address that need.

The City of Escondido has been aggressive in implementing improved safety and mobility for bicycles and pedestrians throughout the City and has demonstrated their commitment to complete streets. The proposed Grand Avenue improvements will require significant resources to provide the changes to the landscaping and infrastructure that will create an exciting experience for shopping and dining, so essential for the historic Downtown to be competitive in today's market. The award of the requested grant would give the City and its citizens that opportunity.

The citizens of Escondido look forward to the transformation of Grand Avenue into a pedestrian-friendly town center that will attract and retain businesses in the historic heart of the City. I respectfully add my support to the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant applications.

Sincerely,



Charles Schwinger
2995 Wohlford Dr.
Escondido, CA 92027



Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

On behalf of Design Moe Kitchen & Bath, Heather Moe and myself, please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. Having been part of the steering committee on this project and strongly believe that making the downtown a vibrant inviting location will benefit the entire city of Escondido and North County. I spend more time here than I do at my home, almost daily I hear someone mention what a charming downtown we have, but they go on to indicate that if there were more places to dine al fresco and enjoy the experience of a downtown they will come back and would share with their friends.

Grand Avenue is the heart of historical downtown Escondido. It has seen a good deal of transformation over the years, reinventing itself as the City has grown, but remaining a town center where people meet, dine and shop. Now, traffic has begun to choke Grand Avenue, and the community developed a new concept for downtown. The vision includes wider sidewalks, narrowing Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, outdoor dining, landscaping and enhancing the downtown brand.

In recent years, incremental change has begun in Escondido, improving livability and creating amenities and fostering a greater sense of place. Improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian networks are being constructed to make it easier for people to move around the City. A positive business atmosphere has encouraged new businesses to become established in the area, creating jobs and great shopping experiences. Improvements have been made along Maple Street and the Mercado to create great spaces where people can gather. The Grand Avenue Complete Streets improvement project will bring more of these improvements to Downtown. The project will activate outdoor space, calm traffic, and encourage people to spend more time exploring downtown.

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the final evolution of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan and help it come into fruition. Design Moe Kitchen & Bath supports the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant applications.

Thank you for your consideration for this much needed project.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D Forster", is written over a horizontal line.

Dan Forster

Design Moe Kitchen & Bath

Karen Youel

From: Alex MacLachlan <amaclachlan1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 3:13 PM
To: Karen Youel
Subject: Re: Support for Grand Visioning

Grand Avenue Vision Project:

To whom it may concern,

As President of the Escondido Downtown Business Association, I can say with confidence, that our organization and its members stand very much in support of the Grand Avenue Vision Project plan to renovate our historic Grand avenue.

This effort started in Jan 2015 as a group of small business owners met in a local coffee shop to discuss ways to make our downtown more attractive and convenient to an ever discerning customer base. In our improvements, we had to consider the limited funds of our city, which was still slowly recovering from the last financial crisis, so bang for our buck was paramount.

We settled on diagonal parking, which doubled the amount of on street parking in front of our businesses, moved the bus line one block away for a better outdoor dining experience, increased the street parking time from two to three hours, so antique shopping and lunch were possible without getting a ticket, and created two 15 minute parking spaces per block for quick stops. All this was designed to make downtown Escondido a more relaxing, convenient, and enjoyable place to enjoy an eclectic mix of family owned businesses.

City management took our suggestions, created a pilot program, and then began the process of building upon our ideas with urban planning concepts that create a more walkable and calming downtown experience. The public and stakeholders in the community were also brought into a committee, to give feedback on these ideas and to create new ones.

As this process evolved over the past two and a half years, downtown Escondido has been discovered by investors and developers interested in building urban housing close to our city center, which would create the urban living environment that has been badly needed for our long struggling downtown businesses.

This Grand Avenue Vision Project would be the first step in attracting and holding new arrivals to our city that these housing projects will bring and in bringing back long time residents who often spend their disposable dollars outside our city.

Already, local residents and civic groups are excited about this possible revitalization of our historic downtown, and they are showing their approval with volunteer efforts in beautifying downtown medians. There is even an anonymous donor who has pledged a significant amount of money to create a gateway monument on the west side of Grand avenue.

Thank you for your consideration of this grant funding. If approved, the Escondido Downtown Business Association will be right there lending a helping hand to bring this project in on time and under budget.

Sincerely,

Alex MacLachlan

March 12, 2018

Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments



RE: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

On behalf of Visit Escondido, please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application.

As a marketing representative for Escondido's 400+ visitor-centric stakeholders, I attended the Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project community meetings and participated in the productive collaborative brainstorming that these meetings generated. A substantial number of our cultural and tourism businesses and organizations are located in our unique historic downtown district that spans Grand Avenue. When you combine that with the walkable location of our renowned Old Escondido Historic District neighborhood, it is clearly imperative that the City continue to preserve and enhance the downtown core.

Grand Avenue is the heart of historical downtown Escondido. It has seen a good deal of transformation over the years, reinventing itself as the City has grown, but remaining a town center where people meet, enjoy galleries, live theatre, educational museums, diverse culinary experiences and unique shopping.

Now, traffic has begun to choke Grand Avenue, and the community has developed a new concept for downtown. The vision includes wider sidewalks, narrowing Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, outdoor dining, landscaping and enhancing the downtown brand, which is critical to growing our presence while maintaining our unique place-based marketing scope.

In recent years, incremental change has begun in Escondido, improving livability and creating amenities and fostering a greater sense of place. Improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian networks are being constructed to make it easier for people to move around the City. A positive business atmosphere has encouraged new businesses to establish themselves in the area, creating jobs and great shopping experiences. Improvements have been made along Maple Street and the Mercado to create great spaces where people can gather.

The Grand Avenue Complete Streets improvement project will bring more of these improvements to Downtown. The project will activate outdoor space, calm traffic, and encourage people to spend more time exploring downtown.

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the final evolution of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan and help it come into fruition. Visit Escondido supports the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant applications.

Thank you for your consideration for this much-needed project.

Sincerely,

Katherine Zimmer
Tourism and Marketing Manager



Visitors Center

235 East Grand Avenue | Escondido CA 92025 | 760-839-4777 | Tue-Fri 10am-4pm

info@visitescondido.com | VisitEscondido.com

Escondido Education COMPACT

220 S. Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025
Telephone: (760) 839-4515
Fax: (760) 738-6076
Website: www.educationcompact.org

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PATRICIA HUERTA
Executive Director

March 13, 2018

Carolina Ilic, Senior Regional Planner
San Diego Association of Governments

SUBJECT: Support for City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant applications: Grand Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project

Dear Ms. Ilic:

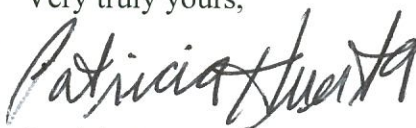
On behalf of **Escondido Education COMPACT** please accept this letter of support for the City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program grant application. Since its inception in 1989, Education COMPACT is committed to providing innovative youth and community development, violence prevention, service learning and SMART Streets/SRTS programs that remain consistent with our original motto: "Creating Opportunities, Making Partnerships and Connecting Teens." Our Youth and Community Development component involves working with residents to train them on advocacy and policy development. Currently, there are 3 community groups that have completed their training and have chosen their Community Improvement Project to focus on walkability, environment design, active transportation and creating safer and more livable communities.

The City of Escondido's Smart Growth Incentive Program that focuses on the improvement to the downtown Grand Avenue corridor is exactly the type of project that our resident groups support. The program vision includes wider sidewalks, narrowing Grand Avenue to one lane in each direction, diagonal parking, outdoor dining, landscaping and enhancing the downtown brand. By keeping the Grand Avenue corridor the central hub of our city and making these improvements will create even a greater space for people and families to come gather, have dinner, and visit the local shops

We look forward to the opportunity to participate in the final evolution of the Grand Avenue Vision Plan and help it come into fruition. Escondido Education COMPACT supports the City of Escondido's Smart Growth grant applications.

Thank you for your consideration for this much needed project.

Very truly yours,



Patricia Huerta,
Executive Director

Escondido's Downtown May Finally Live Up to Its Promise



times-advocate.com/articles/escondidos-downtown-may-finally-live-up-to-its-promise/

By News Desk | on March 11,
2018

March 11, 2018

The recent announcement that the City of Escondido is aggressively going after grant money to reconfigure Grand Avenue from Center City Parkway to Ivy is welcome news. Long-time business and community leaders have long pondered the causes for the malaise that has befallen what should be a vibrant asset to the region, and has gone on for far too long.

The preliminary design proposals I have seen show a new commitment to this historic downtown that should eventually revitalize business opportunities and reward those hardy souls who have pioneered the area as it struggles for traction. Making the suggested changes to Grand Avenue is almost certain to bring downtown Escondido out of the doldrums.

For several years in the 1990s, I served as a traffic commissioner in the city of San Marcos... eight of them as the commission chair. During that time, I came to appreciate the positive effects on quality of life that judicious applications of "traffic calming" engineering on certain roads would achieve.

If you were to look at the most successful downtown shopping and entertainment areas anywhere in our region...or practically anywhere else, for that matter...there is one common thread: slower traffic, often with only one travel lane in each direction. Slowing vehicles makes a given area feel safer for pedestrians. Pedestrians in a relatively compact area of shops and restaurants are the lifeblood of those businesses. By introducing diagonal parking, reducing travel lanes, and adding roundabouts to the streetscape, vehicles travelling on Grand Avenue will instinctively slow down.

People who feel the need to travel faster than 20-25 miles per hour can simply bypass the shopping district and drive down Second Avenue and Valley Parkway.

I think concerns about the effect these proposals might have on Cruisin' Grand are overblown. In fact, I think the new environment, which would include wider sidewalks, will enhance this very popular event.

I've heard complaints from some people that Grand Avenue doesn't need to be changed, and that they like things just as they are now. I find that attitude hard to understand when you look at the number of storefronts that are empty, some of which have been vacant for a decade or more. It's concerning that the status quo of sidewalks rolling up when the sun goes down and would-be shoppers encounter locked doors on businesses at certain hours and on certain days is acceptable. Vibrant entertainment and shopping districts don't shut down at eight o'clock at night, nor do they shut down on Sundays and Mondays.

Another concern I've seen expressed is the idea that adding residences to this part of town is somehow a bad thing. I have made my thoughts concerning adding so many rentals to the area (I would prefer to see more units available for purchase...something desperately needed) but adding more people can only lead to a more vibrant downtown, and more successful businesses as a result.

Let's welcome positive change instead of continuing the destructive impulse to cling to the past.

* * *

Kirk Effinger is a Realtor and Escondido resident. He was an opinion columnist for the North County Times and the San Diego Union-Tribune for several years. He can be reached at: kirk.w.effinger@gmail.com.

*Note: Opinions expressed by columnists and letter writers are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the newspaper.

More From Opinion Go To The Opinion Section

This is how freedom is lost— Part I
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The debt and deficit
kings and queens