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## CSD general manager addresses Citizens Alliance, community

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He may work behind the scenes, but Wayne Lowery is one of the most significant figures in El Dorado Hills.

As general manager of EDH's Community Services District since 1990, he's overseen park construction amidst the hilly haven's skyrocketing population and development.

Last Thursday, residents had the chance to pick Lowery's brain about the community's hottest topics -- from incorporation to park impact fees and recreation -- at the monthly meeting of the El Dorado Hills Citizens Alliance.

Paul Raveling, Citizens Alliance president and cityhood supporter, kicked off the meeting with talk of the failed bid for incorporation in November 2005. Measure P opponents, many who feared higher cityhood would mean higher taxes and a development slowdown-poured far more money into their campaign.

"We learned that there's a big learning curve to climb," said Raveling. One obstacle is that El Dorado Hills is a large source of El Dorado County's income, cityhood advocates said. And whether EDH incorporates is mostly up to the county.

"LAFCO (Land Agency Formation Commission) has the full power to bless incorporation," Lowery explained, advising that incorporation backers find out why LAFCO denied the first bid before making another move. To begin a new incorporation effort would require either signatures of 25 percent of the proposed incorporated population or backing by an agency, such as the county, CSD, or El Dorado Hills Fire Department.

Incorporation is intertwined with another issue of concern: park impact fees.

CSD has struggled to raise the fees, which are levied on new residences to pay for parks needed to keep up with growth. Due to increased construction fees, hilly terrain, and asbestos mitigation, the district is currently in a deficit. But the Board of Supervisors has denied each of CSD's new fee proposals since last year.

To address the supervisors' concerns, plans for a new office were reduced from 20,000 to 12,000 square feet and features of the aquatics center were scaled down. Instead of the \$15,400 single residence fee board members agreed on last November, which equated to nearly a 119 percent increase over current fees, CSD now plans to ask for just \$9,806.

Cityhood backers argued that, as an independent city, land use decisions would be made by residents rather than officials living elsewhere in El Dorado County. El Dorado Hills is different than the rest of the county, they said.

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