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El Dorado Hills voters reject development of dormant golf course

Advisory vote intended to send message to county Board of Supervisors

Advocates of development urged ‘no’ vote as protest against ‘land use by ballot box’

Jamie Brockardt of Fair Oaks takes on the sixth hole at the now-closed El Dorado Hills Golf Course in 2002. The site’s owner sees it as part of a future planned community. CHRIS CREWELL Sacramento Bee Staff Photo

By Cathy Locke

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Asked whether the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors should rezone the former El Dorado Hills Golf Course site to allow residential and commercial development, El Dorado Hills voters overwhelmingly said “no” Tuesday.

With all nine precincts counted, results showed nearly 91 percent opposed and 9 percent in favor. The advisory measure, placed on the ballot by the El Dorado Hills Community Services District board, was intended to send a message to the Board of Supervisors, which decides land use issues in the community.

But in a confusing move, both the official proponents and opponents urged “no” votes.

Four members of the community services district board were listed in ballot materials as proponents because they placed the measure on the ballot. But they urged a “no” vote because they oppose changing the zoning. They favor maintaining the property for open space and recreational use and wanted the imprimatur of voters to help persuade El Dorado supervisors.

Those signing the ballot argument against the measure included El Dorado Hills Chamber of Commerce CEO Debbie Manning. She said the chamber’s board of directors had taken no position on potential development of the approximately 100-acre site but was opposed to “land use by ballot box.”

Parker Development Co., which owns the property, closed the golf course in January 2007, citing financial losses and competition. The golf course property, north of Highway 50 and east of El Dorado Hills Boulevard, is part of 257 acres that the firm envisions as a planned community that would include a mix of residential open space and public land uses.

Elsewhere on Tuesday's ballot, the "semi-official" Election Night returns showed that a \$3.2 million bond for the Placerville Union School District had barely reached the 55 percent threshold required for passage – a result that could change by the time results are certified. The school district said it intended to use Measure B funds to upgrade computers, technology and software in the district.

Meanwhile, the tiny Cosumnes River Community Services District south of Placerville lacked enough votes in the semi-official returns to increase its annual parcel tax by \$100 a year. The district needed two-thirds approval, and the measure had 63 percent in support compared to 37 percent opposed. Only 89 votes were cast as of the Election Night tally.

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