

Dear Editor,

This holiday season I am giving the gift of candor. While candor is not as intoxicating as complete honesty, it is more popular than accountability, and for those who prefer to sip their reality straight it is a gift that will keep on giving. Consider the subject of RDA, aka Redevelopment Agency, money. RDA funds are the crucial component of every miracle the city tries to work. From beautifying the entry to the downtown, to buying statues, to bailing out the local barkeep, awards of RDA money make it happen. RDA dollars are tax dollars, or more simply put, dollars taken out of our pockets. This money could go to the schools, but if ever we produced a generation of voters who could read and do simple math, the inmates of city hall might be in trouble.

Is there enough commerce in Boulder City to justify having a chamber of commerce? Should we have a chamber if it requires an RDA subsidy to remain in operation? Likewise, how much more beautification can the downtown stand? I can see where the project makes perfect sense if you are a local politician, who accepted donations from local contractors, who are now eager to cash in on a pork project; but what does it do for the community as a whole? If the beautification project disrupts traffic it will disrupt business, and there is already precious little of that left to sustain the downtown merchants.

Instead of a beautification we could do a "truthification." All those RDA dollars have turned the downtown into a bowery, so why not just change the name of Nevada Way to Bourbon Street? There is also that perennially unprofitable white elephant hotel to contend with. On the last day of last month our resident philanthropist, Charles Coombes, III, hand delivered a letter to my mailbox. Mr. Coombes invited me to breakfast at "his" hotel, and blew enough smoke to make the Vegas valley look like the Los Angeles basin during a smog alert, all it an attempt to get into my wallet. It did not work. It is hard to take someone who stiffes the post office (which is, incidentally, a federal offense) seriously. Mr. Coombes has recently been spending his money advertising in the RJ for someone to put their money into his bowling alley. I wonder how long it will be before he asks for an RDA handout too.

Happy Holidays To All,

Dick Farmer