

BUYING AN ELECTION

Developers back Nathanson, Denner, Slocum, Meisner with big bucks.

BY ALAN PITTMAN

Actually buying votes is illegal. But buying the expensive ads that get you votes is enshrined in the Constitution, courts have said. And in the hotly contested fight this election over who will control local government, developers are spending big bucks for votes.

Developers who stand to cash in on urban sprawl, freeways and weak environmental regulations have pumped cash into Nancy Nathanson's bid for mayor

and into a slate of similarly pro-sprawl council candidates.

Development interests — including developers, builders, real estate speculators, construction companies and local land and timber barons — contributed a total of \$38,000 to Nathanson's campaign as of May 9. Local big business and wealthy conservatives helped kick in another \$24,000. In total Nathanson has reported \$62,000 in campaign contributions.



NATHANSON



MEISNER



SLOCUM



DENNER

Conservative candidates have received large contributions from a few wealthy donors.

Chamber PAC

Nathanson's biggest contributor is the Eugene Chamber of Commerce political action committee. The Chamber PAC donated \$3,618 directly to Nathanson and is also apparently supporting her campaign with tens of thousands of dollars more in survey and political consultant work.

The Chamber PAC is itself funded largely by big development interests. The PAC has amassed \$54,000 in contributions over the past two years, \$36,000 of it from development interests.

The Chamber of Commerce has 1,200 members, but its PAC is funded by only a small group of wealthy pro-sprawl and anti-environmental interests. Twenty-one donors who contributed \$1,000 or more account for nearly nine out of 10 dollars that the PAC has raised. The average contribution to the PAC is nearly \$600.

The Papé family was the largest contributor to the Chamber PAC, giving \$5,050. The Papé Group sells heavy equipment to developers and road builders and owns the Sanipac garbage company.

The Chambers family and associated companies contributed \$3,500 to the Chamber of Commerce PAC. Carolyn Chambers owns Chambers Construction and Chambers Communications (KEZI).

Gretchen Pierce and her companies gave the PAC \$3,250. Pierce's family profits from development and timber.

Donors associated with Duncan & Brown (real estate analysis), the Giustina

family (land speculation and timber), Hamilton construction, Jerry's Home Improvement, Michael Schwartz (M. Jacobs Furniture), and Charles Warren (Excalibur Cutlery) gave \$3,000 each.

The Giustinas contributed thousands more to the Chamber PAC indirectly. The Giustinas gave \$3,000 to the Repeal Unfair Taxes PAC. The Unfair Taxes PAC then gave \$4,466 to the Chamber PAC in in-kind and cash donations.

Sand, gravel and construction companies were also big donors to the PAC. Delta gave \$2,000, Wildish gave \$1,300, Egge \$1,000, and Eugene Sand & Gravel \$1,000. Rexius Forest Products, landscaping supplier, gave \$1,000. Developer and lumberman J.P. Hammer gave another \$1,000.

Pro-sprawl business interests were the other big funder of the Chamber PAC, contributing a total of \$17,000. Developer Rob Bennett, owner of the Downtown Athletic Club, gave \$2,000 and business lawyers at Gaydos Churnside gave \$1,000. The local Pepsi bottling company gave another \$1,000.

Hynix Semiconductor, beneficiary of more than \$40 million in city tax breaks and permits to destroy dozens of acres of wetlands, also gave \$1,000 to the Chamber PAC.

Nathanson Donors

After the Chamber PAC, the Giustina family and their companies were the next largest contributor to Nathanson. The Giustinas gave Nathanson a total of \$3,600.

The Wildish clan gave \$3,000 and the Papés gave \$2,875.

The state's leading pro-sprawl lobbying groups, the Homebuilders Association and Realtors PACs, each gave Nathanson \$2,000.

The Gonyea family, land speculators that sold Hynix property for its factory, gave Nathanson \$1,050. Greg Demers, a land speculator hoping to cash in on the West Eugene Parkway, gave another \$1,000. The McKay and Connor families of real estate

investors gave \$1,000 each. Triad Hospital, hoping to locate a facility in Eugene with taxpayer subsidies, gave another \$1,000. PeaceHealth hospital CEO Alan Yordy gave Nathanson \$500 through his registered business, The Infinity Group.

Construction interests including Chambers, Hamilton, Rexius and the Delta, Egge and Eugene Sand & Gravel companies gave \$1,000 each to Nathanson. Other conservative business interests including Bennett, Nike board member John E. Jaqua,

GANG OF 13

Top Donors Account for Nearly Half of Pro-Sprawl Cash

Giustina (land speculation and timber)	\$10,550
Papé (Papé Group, heavy equipment, Sanipac)	\$8,925
Chambers (construction and KEZI)	\$5,000
Wildish (sand & gravel mining and construction)	\$4,800
Hamilton Construction Company	\$4,000
Gretchen Pierce (developer, timber)	\$3,850
Duncan & Brown (real estate analysis)	\$3,750
Charles Warren (Excalibur Cutlery)	\$3,600
Delta Sand & Gravel (mining and construction)	\$3,250
Oregon Homebuilders PAC	\$3,250
Jerry's Home Improvement	\$3,000
Rob Bennett (developer, Downtown Athletic Club owner)	\$3,000
Michael Schwartz (M. Jacobs Furniture)	\$3,000

Source: EW analysis of C&E reports for May election and last two years of Chamber PAC donations. Totals combine donations of family members and companies associated with each special interest.