

Revamp of Fresno Plans, Zoning Code Aims to Create ‘Next Great American Downtown’

BY JOSH STEPHENS

In 2002, the Grizzlies AAA baseball team moved into Chukchansi Park in the heart of downtown Fresno. Like many other such “catalytic” stadiums across the country, it was meant to spark development and bring life to California’s most sprawling, poorest big city. In the past 13 years, the Grizzlies have muddled along with but a

single division title. Aside from a few new breweries and tech firms, the city’s downtown has not fared much better.

Now, the city’s boosters and public officials are putting their faith in a brand-new game plan.

Last month, the Fresno City Council approved a package

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insight
WILLIAM
FULTON

Urban Laboratories of Democracy

In the middle of the most important urban renaissance in a century, the people of the United States have elected a president who lives in a 58-story mixed-use building in midtown Manhattan. Whatever you think of him, the president-elect is a man who ought to understand cities. He has lived in America’s largest city his entire life. He comes from a family that has developed and managed urban real estate for three generations. The glitziness of major cities

– New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, even Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. – has always had a magnetic appeal for him.

And yet Donald Trump’s election may be the most anti-urban act on the American political stage since the nomination of William Jennings Bryan 120 years ago, when the populist Nebraskan railed against New York bankers in a fiery speech at

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Sacramento Approves Railyards Project

After decades of discussion, the Sacramento City Council voted unanimously to approve plans and [certify](#) the environmental impact report for development of 244 acres of defunct Union Pacific rail yards adjacent to downtown. The proposal by Downtown Railyard Venture LLC includes a major-league soccer stadium, hospital, and a mix of housing and shops. It would include up to 10,000 residential units and over 3 million square feet of commercial space. Earlier this month two of Sacramento region's largest labor organizations, Sacramento Central Labor Council and UNITE HERE Local 49, said they [oppose](#) the MLS stadium in the downtown railyard because Sacramento Republic FC has not committed to allowing stadium food-service workers to organize. The letter the labor leaders wrote to City Council includes a statement indicating that food-service workers at other Major League Soccer stadiums in California are free to organize. Since the City Council approved the project, executive director of the

Sacramento Central Labor Council said the union was withdrawing its opposition and was willing to work with the project developers to ensure good jobs are brought to the area.

Oakland Releases Transportation Strategic Plan

The recently established Oakland Department of Transportation released its strategic plan, which focuses on four pillars: equitable jobs and housing; holistic community safety; vibrant, sustainable infrastructure; and responsive, trustworthy government. The [plan](#) includes a range of goals and strategies in those four categories that the city will pursue. Other points include that transportation has a role in maintaining affordability, strong policies must be made, governments with accountability and transparency, and lastly that the focus must be on the region instead of only Oakland. OakDOT is comprised of 270 staff and 18 work units from the Department of Public Works and the Police Departments. The strategy calls for partnerships with the departments of Planning and Building, Race and Equity, local transit partners, and

stakeholders at the local, regional, state and federal levels. (See prior CP&DR [coverage](#).)

L.A. County Gold Line Spurs \$6.7 Billion in Transit Oriented Development

The Foothill Gold Line Construction Authority [released](#) two reports that detail the amount of transit-oriented development that has been built or is underway within a half-mile radius of a current and future Gold Line stations. The reports reveal that TOD projects near 18 Gold Line stations from Chinatown to Montclair have resulted in \$6.7 billion in private investments since 2003. More than 12,500 new housing units, 3.6 million square feet of commercial space and 1,400 hotel rooms have been built within a half-mile radius of a Gold Line station. The [potential](#) TOD for Phase 2 corridor from Arcadia to Montclair would add 17,000 more housing units, 10 million additional square feet of commercial space and 250 more hotel rooms as well as generating \$100 million more in annual tax revenues to LA County. The six Pasadena stations amount to

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\$3.3 billion in economic output and roughly 20,700 jobs.

Los Angeles Takes Stock of Thousands of City-Owned Parcels

The City of Los Angeles controller's office recently a [database](#) of counts of properties including parking lots, parks, and orange groves that the city owns but that had not previously been cataloged comprehensively. The data shows the city owns 9,900 parcels in Los Angeles County, much more than previously listed. City officials see this as a first step toward identifying land that could be sold, leased or better utilized for things like condominiums, affordable housing development, parks, or other public facilities. While the databases shows parks, airports and government buildings most residents recognize as city property, the city also found that in 1969 officials began purchasing vacant desert lots in Palmdale to build an airport- there are 17,500 acres in Palmdale that Los Angeles owns. The system will be further detailed to include information on zoning, parking, energy usage, and in some cases estimated property value.

Banning Ranch Developers Sue Coastal Commission

The developers of Newport Banning Ranch are [suing](#) over the Coastal Commission's decision to reject a plan to clean up the 401-acre oilfield, and build 895-single family homes, 75-room resort, hostel, and commercial space. The developers are seeking \$490 million in damages for failing to approve the project and

for taking property without proper compensation. The commission recommended a scaled-down version with half as many homes, which the builders say was not economically feasible and effectively rejected any development. Newport Banning Ranch's senior project manager said in a prepared statement: "There were an extraordinary and unprecedented amount of procedural errors, misinformation and errors in fact that did not provide the opportunity for a balanced decision."

Bay Area Worries About Changes to AHSC Guidelines

Impending [changes](#) to California's cap-and-trade program formula may mean some Bay Area cities will no longer qualify state grants that have brought \$106 million to the region's disadvantaged, polluted communities, according to an analysis by the San Francisco Chronicle. These grants, funded under the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program, are used to improve public health and the environment by funding affordable housing near public transit, planting trees and encouraging car-sharing programs. Communities in the San Joaquin Valley and Los Angeles basin are overshadowing cities such as Richmond, Pittsburg, Antioch, San Jose, Rodeo and Oakland. The agency revised its qualification criteria to add high housing costs to the 200 indicators used to determine which communities are most in need. In the current formula the Bay Area has 4.2 percent of communities in the state that qualify for grants, this

number would fall to 2.8 percent.

Projects in S.D., S.F., and Santa Monica Win Highest ULI Honors

The Urban Land Institute Awards for Excellence [recognizes](#) the full development process of a project, not just the architecture or design. This year, ULI honored eleven projects worldwide, three of which are located in California. A midrise residential tower, Celadon at 9th and Broadway in San Diego incorporates "sustainable design" and "provide affordable housing and healthy living standards all while making a reasonable return on investment." Ocean Avenue South is a mixed use development in Santa Monica described as a "model for high density urban master planned public-private development focused around public access and connectivity. The Strand in San Francisco is a renovated movie theater turned into a nonprofit performance space that "represents a key component to the revitalization of this long disinvested part of the city."

\$1.2B San Diego Seaport Project Clears Hurdle

The San Diego Unified Port District [approved](#) the joint venture of 1HWY1 as the developer for the \$1.2 billion Seaport San Diego project. Seaport San Diego will replace the existing 1980s-era Seaport Village with a waterfront development with 1,077-room hotel, office space for port-related businesses, a charter school, a park, and aquarium and amusement park rides. The port will take in an estimated \$22 million in rent each year by the time the 10-year

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project is complete – nearly ten times as much as the current Seaport Village generates. The project must still get California Coastal Commission approval. Meanwhile, one of the key players in 1HYW1, Bartell Hotels, has recently been [accused](#) of making potentially improper donations to defeat Measure D, a hotel-tax proposal. Bartell Hotels donated \$43,350 to the San Diego County Taxpayers Association’s anti-Measure D campaign; five days later, the taxpayer association paid \$46,000 to a newly formed Manolatos Nelson Murphy Advertising, which is associated with Port Commissioner Bob Nelson. Nelson insists that there is no conflict of interest.

Shirey to Depart after Five Years as Sacramento City Manager

Sacramento City Manager and veteran member of the California planning and land use community John Shirey is [completing](#) his contract this week after five years on the job.

Shirey is credited with improving the city’s finances and spearheading the development of Golden 1 Center arena. Mayor Kevin Johnson said Shirey “was the right man for the job.” Shirey had previously led the California Redevelopment Association. He presided over the organization when Gov. Jerry Brown proposed dissolution of redevelopment and negotiated for a compromise. That fight ultimately ended in a court ruling that backfired on the CRA, calling for full dissolution of redevelopment. When Shirey announced his departure at the beginning of the year, some questioned the timing. They said that Shirey should stay on to provide continuity after Johnson’s departure due to term limits. Assistant City Manager Howard Chan will serve as interim city manager at least until June, with a permanent manager to be named by Mayor-elect Darrel Steinberg. Shirey has not indicated what his next move will be.

<http://www.cacities.org/Top/News/News-Articles/2016/November/League-Establishes-Strategic-Goals-for-2017>

League of Cities Sets 2017 Goals

The 107 leaders of the League of California Cities met in Newport Beach early November to develop the League’s 2017 strategic goals. The meetings included leaders from various divisions, departments, policy committees, diversity groups, board of directors, as well as various city officials. These goals include increasing funding for critical transportation and water infrastructure, develop realistic responses to the homeless crisis, improve the affordability of workforce housing and secure additional funds, and addressing public safety impacts of reduced sentencing laws. Most of the solutions involve increasing state and federal financial support and reducing regulatory barriers. ■



Big Land Use Ballot Yields Mixed Bag of Results

BY JOSH STEPHENS

In one of the biggest land-use elections in recent California history, voters around the state delivered a mixed bag of results.

In historically slow-growth counties such as Ventura, Santa Clara, and Sonoma, growth boundaries won -- most notably in Ventura County, where a renewal of the SOAR growth boundary measure beat a competing initiative placed on the ballot by agricultural landowners.

Meanwhile, an extreme slow-growth measure was defeated in Santa Monica after a white-hot race, two measures to build new stadiums for the San Diego Chargers football team failed (meaning the team might be headed to L.A.), transportation taxes passed in Los Angeles but failed to get two-thirds in San Diego and Ventura counties, and eight Bay Area rent control measures split right down the middle. Rent control measures passed most overwhelmingly in the East Bay cities of Richmond and Oakland.

Statewide, voters approved Proposition 53, a school funding measure that some critics say will promote sprawl because it unduly favors new construction rather than rehabilitation of existing schools. The passage of Proposition 64 legalizes recreational marijuana and is likely to set off a wave of local regulations to, depending on the jurisdiction, oppose or promote cultivation and retail sales. Finally, projects like High Speed Rail and the proposed Bay-Delta water tunnels survived the threat of Proposition 53, which would have put such big-ticket infrastructure projects to a popular vote.

Voters in Santa Monica rejected Measure LV, a slow-growth measure that would have put virtually all projects taller than 32 feet to a popular vote. Many in the Los Angeles area saw Measure LV as an affront to planning, as it would have undone the city's Land Use and Circulation Element, which was adopted to much praise in 2010. Likewise, housing advocates in the area decried Measure LV as an extreme symptom of so-called NIMBYism. Meanwhile, a similar measure passed overwhelmingly in Costa Mesa.

Winning measures are in bold. Per the provisions of Proposition 13, measures that called for new taxes required 2/3 approval, so some measured received more than 50

percent of the vote and still failed.

STATEWIDE

Proposition 51 Public School Facility Bonds

Authorizes \$9 billion in general obligation bonds for new construction and modernization of K-12 public school facilities; charter schools and vocational education facilities; and California Community Colleges facilities. Fiscal Impact: State costs of about \$17.6 billion to pay off both the principal (\$9 billion) and interest (\$8.6 billion) on the bonds. Payments of about \$500 million per year for 35 years.

Yes 4,501,142 53.93%
No 3,845,288 46.07%

Proposition 53 Approval Requirement for Revenue Bonds above \$2 Billion Initiative

Requires statewide voter approval before any revenue bonds can be issued or sold by the state for certain projects if the bond amount exceeds \$2 billion. Fiscal Impact: State and local fiscal effects are unknown and would depend on which projects are affected by the measure and what actions government agencies and voters take in response to the measure's voting requirement.

No 4,170,573 51.53%
Yes 3,923,541 48.47%

Proposition 64 Marijuana Legalization Initiative

Legalizes marijuana under state law, for use by adults 21 or older. Imposes state taxes on sales and cultivation. Provides for industry licensing and establishes standards for marijuana products. Allows local regulation and taxation. Fiscal Impact: Additional tax revenues ranging from high hundreds of millions of dollars to over \$1 billion annually, mostly dedicated to specific purposes. Reduced criminal justice costs of tens of millions of dollars annually.

Yes 4,793,618 56.09%
No 3,753,364 43.91%

Financial Recovery, Dissolution of Redevelopment Chris McKenzie's Career at Helm of League of Cities

BY JOSH STEPHENS

Chris McKenzie recently announced his retirement as executive director of the League of California Cities, the advocacy group that represents over 450 of California's cities and represents them in Sacramento. A 40-year veteran of public service, McKenzie guided the organization through the development boom of the early 2000s, the recession and statewide financial crisis of the late 2000s, the legislative success of Senate Bill 375 in 2008, and the dissolution of redevelopment and subsequent lawsuit two years later.

McKenzie departs the League at a time when the state's finances and fortunes seem secure but when prosperity is creating its own challenges such as traffic congestion, the housing crisis, and tensions over density and new development patterns. With his successor Carolyn Coleman, a former official at the National League of Cities, to arrive in December, McKenzie spoke with CP&DR's Josh Stephens about his 17-year tenure and the state of California's cities.

As you complete your tenure at the League, what are you most proud of?

I'm perhaps most proud of helping the cities of the state come together to stabilize their revenues and prevent the state from diverting state revenues. I also feel good that the organization is now able to focus on a few goals around issues that unite cities around the state, rather than being spread too thinly and not achieving very much.

From an overarching standpoint, those are the accomplishments that I take a lot of satisfaction in. But



I didn't accomplish them on my own, of course. It took a tremendous group effort by our board and staff.

What are California cities' strengths and weaknesses now as opposed to when you started this job?

While certainly the Great Recession took a toll on cities beginning around 2008, they are now on the other side of that and are seeing some growth in their revenues. In the late 1990s when I arrived, cities, counties, and special districts had endured about nine years of state property tax diversions, which had seriously strained their budgets.

We've been able to pass some ballot measures to protect those and other revenues, which has created a lot more predictability for cities. The state no longer can come in and divert those property tax revenues in order to balance its own budget, which is a very significant change. I've heard many officials say that that allows them to engage in longer-term planning.

How is the overall relationship between cities and Sacramento?

I think and I hope that it's more respectful. There are probably a number of reasons for that. Until the cities of the state were willing, along with counties and their special district counterparts, to come together to say that the state couldn't do this anymore, it was very easy to be divided and conquered. I'm not saying that the state officials necessarily thought about it that systematically. But they were doing it, and they kept doing it even when they didn't need the money in the late 1990s, when the economy got a

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lot stronger.

In the middle part of the last decade, we had a couple of ballot measures that were masquerading as eminent domain reform. But we believe that it was really designed to eviscerate local land use powers. The cities believe that their powers have been largely protected and that we have a relationship with the legislature, which has been enhanced by term limits and the fact that a large number of former city officials are in the legislature now, a much more respectful relationship. We don't always agree with state officials, but I think everybody wants the relationship to be strong and respectful.

What are your observations about contemporary urban planning trends and the ways that those trends have been received by your member cities?

I think there's a number of ways to look at that. One is, since the the governor and the legislature eliminated redevelopment we've lost a very powerful tool to shape cities. Even though there was some disgruntlement in some quarters about the way tax increment financing was used in some cities, California was leading the way. I'm sure everybody will agree that the vast majority of cities were using it properly. It allowed us to deal with some very significant brownfield problems. It allowed us to reclaim our riverfronts. I think it paved the way for a lot of the infill development that's going on even today.

The loss of that tool was as big a blow as almost anything you might think of in terms of conventional land use planning or regulatory power, because we lost that incentive. If you can create a market incentive to do what a community wants, it's much more powerful in most cases than a regulatory restriction is, without the downsides that go with it.

The one other area that I've been very pleased to see was the development of the SB 375 planning and financing tool, focused on trying to make land use decisions more cognizant and respectful of greenhouse gas emissions. That was a very challenging decision for our organization back in '07-08. Yet our board and members came to the table to fashion that tool.

It's one of those once-in-a-generation changes in the law that's going to take a little while to see the results of. When you begin to use transportation funding to incentivize land use, you can achieve denser development around transit hubs, multiuse development kinds of development patterns. It's going in a direction that we found out pretty quickly that the market was going anyway. It served a complementary role in local and regional planning circles. I think that was perhaps the other major land use-related development during my tenure.

At the same time, the league has had concerns about things like reduced housing regulations and inclusionary zoning. How do we use those tools to achieve the larger goals of policies like SB 375?

The best place to balance them is at the local level. Writing a statewide parking standard is, I would submit, something you should only do that as a last resort. I can't imagine a parking standard that is going to fit every community without some kind of externality or unintended consequence. However, if you create fiscal incentives, as was done with SB 375, for that kind of development, cities do respond. The state has jumped too often to using a heavy-handed approach instead of looking at the fiscal approaches.

For example, everybody agrees we need a larger housing supply and more affordable housing. The effect of the elimination of redevelopment is to take \$1.7 billion in revenue away from affordable housing projects, compared to the \$400 million that the governor put on the table this last session. The state has dramatically reduced its investment in helping cities work with nonprofits. It's eviscerated the funding. Virtually every affordable housing project in the last 20 years occurred because there was redevelopment funding in the projects. It was always one of the final pots of funds that would help these projects pencil out. Ignoring that is ignoring reality.

Cities need the state to partner better with them so there's a fiscal reward to pay for services that will be required to serve the new development. You just can't keep putting off those investment decisions.

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Prop. 13 has significantly hindered our ability to collect tax revenue. If we can figure out ways so that cities are rewarded with property tax when they take the politically difficult road of approving more higher-density housing, then we're probably going to see more of it. They'll be able to say to their communities, "we'll be able to build more community facilities....It's not just a zero-sum game."

We're willing to have serious discussions about streamlining the housing approval process if cities are able to make decisions where they might get rewarded financially so they can mitigate the burdens that come from approving higher densities of housing.

Does the League have influence over the cities that are especially reluctant to add housing or embrace density?

This all becomes real when we find that our children and grandchildren can't afford to live near us. And we're not moving out of our places because Prop. 13 penalizes us if we move out of our residences. Higher densities are exactly in line with where our children and probably our grandchildren want to see our cities go. They're not going to want to stay in low-density, single-family suburbs that aren't prepared to bring in some of the amenities that come with higher density development.

It's really the art of capitalizing on where the market is going, creating win-win situations where cities that make these tough choices, including the residents, have to see it's in their self-interest to solve this problem.

Those conversations are happening. The state, meanwhile, has the \$1.7 billion sitting in its treasury and is using it for everything but housing. They have not only a political but a moral obligation to put up a sizable amount of ongoing revenue if we hope to solve this problem.

Now that we're a few years out, what's your assessment on the lawsuits and the demise of redevelopment?

The governor proposed to eliminate redevelopment entirely. He did not propose to do anything but that. I believe he did that in large measure because he was desperate. He had a \$26 billion deficit. He thought this was a good way to generate money over a number of years. I don't think we

can underestimate the difficulties he was facing.

We came up with a proposal to generate a billion dollars in additional revenue. We gave it to both chambers and to the governor's office. They said they wanted more. We knew it was impossible. Given the funds that were already committed it was unlikely that more than \$1 billion could be generated that quickly.

It was going to rely on voluntary measures by local agencies. The voters had just passed a ballot measure that the legislature could not demand an annual amount of money while they retained the ability to abolish the agencies, they did not have the ability to order the payment. But the California Redevelopment Association proposed a plan, the League endorsed it.

That was rejected. The legislature came up with their two-bill package that basically said, "if you don't do this you're going to be eliminated." Both of our boards of directors felt it was totally unacceptable. The voters had just spoken. It was clear that one of the two bills at least was unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court obviously sided with the state and we've gone through what was a terribly unfortunate and expensive dissolution process.

Do you have any regrets about the lawsuit?

Hindsight is 20-20 and it's always tempting to try to revisit and second-guess. I was there. I knew the temperature of the CRA. I knew the temperature of the League board of directors and our members. They were absolutely livid that within a year of the voters saying that the money if they weren't unconstitutionally diverted. There were individual cities and counties that sued to stop it as well. Ours was one of many suits.

It was absurd to suggest that the two bills were independent of each other. The court didn't look any further than the plain meaning of the language. They chose to ignore the legislative history, as is their prerogative.

The court decided [[in the Matosantos case](#)] that one bill was unconstitutional, the one that prevented the diversion of the funds. They struck it down, but the bill that abolished

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the agencies they said was valid. That led to the result we now see. It's been not only a tragedy but I think it's been a colossal failure for the state.

The only regret is that I wish the court had seen it for what it was. I'm convinced that it was a ruse that the court chose not to expose. But that's their choice. I respect their decisions.

Assembly members told me they voted for it only because it was promised that it would be restored. They voted in a way that was totally inconsistent with their comments on the floor. It happened in both chambers but especially in the Assembly. They knew how important it was to their communities. But they took that vote.

What advice do you have for your successor?

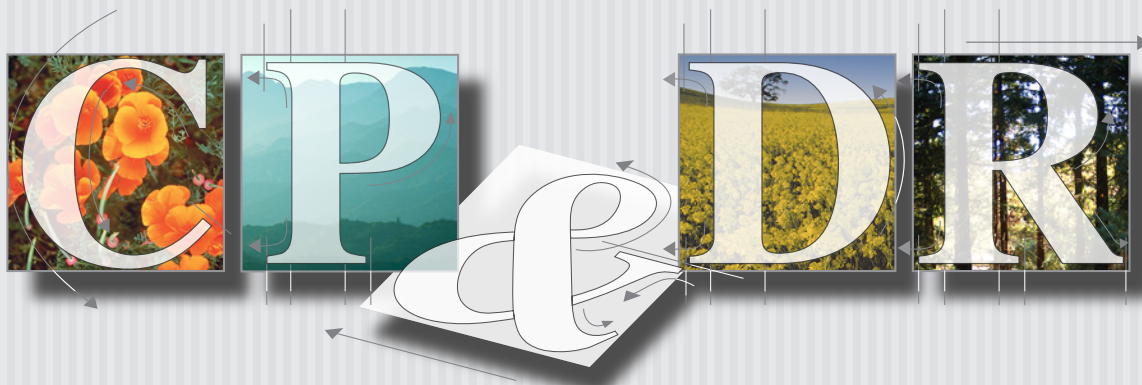
Speak softly and carry a big stick – Teddy Roosevelt's

advice in foreign affairs. You have to have the capacity to move the policy process even at the ballot box. Ultimately it's that capacity which allows you to get a lot done in the legislature. It doesn't mean you have to be disrespectful about it. It's really important to be respectful and to partner with the legislature and governor whenever possible. To use the courts to defend the leg victories and try to strike down the losses.

At the end of the day, people say it's about local control. Actually, I say it's about community self-government and about local democracy. We have as an organization been fighting to keep democracy as strong as possible at the local level. ■

Conducted in September, this interview has been edited and condensed.

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legal digest

General Plan Policy Not Sufficient For Insignificance

BY WILLIAM FULTON

A city cannot rely only on its general plan to determine that the traffic impacts of a development project are not significant, the Third District Court of Appeal has ruled. It's a potentially important case that says an impact's significance determination is not necessarily tied to meeting a particular threshold.

In considering a challenge to the environmental impact report for a residential project in East Sacramento, the Third District rejected most of the arguments brought by a neighborhood group. But the court said the city could not rely on general plan levels of service to conclude that traffic impacts in the "core area" around the project were not significant – especially since the same EIR concluded that the same levels of service *were* significant outside the core area.

"[T]he EIR contains no explanation why such increases in traffic in the core area are not significant impacts, other than reliance on the mobility element of the general plan that permits LOS F in the core area during peak times," wrote Justice Elena Duarte for a three-judge panel of the Third District.

The case involved a 328-unit residential development in McKinley Park known as McKinley Village, located on a 48-acre site. The EIR was challenged on several grounds by neighborhood group, East Sacramento Partnership for a Livable City. The Third District rejected all of the

Partnerships arguments except the one about traffic impacts.

In arguing against the Partnership's claim, the city relied on a general plan policy that said Level of Service (LOS) F was acceptable in a particular "core area" of East Sac, assuming system improvements are made and non-vehicular alternatives are provided. Relying on a series of appellate cases, however, the Third District concluded – quoting from a 1986 case from Antioch – that "compliance with a general plan in and of itself 'does not insulate a project from the EIR requirement, where it may be fairly argued that the project will generate significant environmental effects'."

In particular, the court relied on heavily on *Protect the Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency* (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th 1099, a case involving the replacement of a 130-year canal with a pipeline, which depended on a threshold contained in the CEQA Guidelines to determine that a resulting reduction in stream flows was insignificant.

In that case, the Third District wrote, "(T)he fact that a particular environmental effect meets a particular threshold cannot be used as an automatic determinant that the effect is or is not significant. ... In preparing an EIR, the agency must consider and resolve every fair argument that can be made about the possible significant environmental effects of a project,

irrespective of whether an established threshold of significance has been met with respect to any given effect."

In the East Sacramento case, the Third District applied this reasoning to the thresholds contained in the general plan. "The EIR found these impacts to be less than significant based solely on the mobility element in the City's general plan. However, the EIR finds similar changes to LOS conditions in East Sacramento, outside the core area, *are* significant impacts and require mitigation. Accordingly, there is evidence of a significant impact on traffic on 28th, 29th, and 30th Streets. As in *Amador Waterways*, the EIR contains no explanation why such increases in traffic in the core area are not significant impacts, other than reliance on the mobility element of the general plan that permits LOS F in the core area during peak times." ■

The Case:

[East Sacramento Partnership for a Livable City v. City of Sacramento, C079614](#)

The Lawyers:

For East Sacramento Partnership for a Livable City: Geoffrey Keith Willis, Larson, Willis & Woodard, gwillis@lwwillp.com

For City of Sacramento: Jeffrey C. Heeren, Deputy City Attorney, JHeeren@cityofsacramento.org

For Encore McKinley Village (real party in interest): Tina Thomas, Thomas Law Group, tthomas@thomaslaw.com

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of plans and regulations for greater downtown Fresno, including the urban core and surrounding neighborhoods. The plans serve a dual purpose: They are meant to promote a new style of denser, more progressive development and they are meant to eliminate bureaucratic impediments that gave would-be developers fits.

In October the council voted 7-0 to approve the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan, the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan for the city’s main street, and a new Downtown Development Code. Taken together, the new regulations set forth a comprehensive vision for a 7,290-acre area. They promote greater densities, a mix of uses, new urban design standards, and, perhaps most importantly, provide clarity for by-right development. The plan envisions up to 10,000 units of infill housing and 15,000 new residents.

“This represents a total reform of our land use policies and regulations,” said Dan Zack, Assistant Director with Fresno Development & Resource Management. “People who want to come in... have an incredibly easy path to approval (with) tough but clear standards.”

Aaron Blair, president and CEO of the Downtown Fresno Partnership, said that the old regulations included “overbearing” provisions, such as onerous parking requirements.

“A lot of items are by-right now. It draws a straight line so the development world knows exactly what they have to do,” said Blair. “There’s not a lot of guessing.”

The plans also anticipate the arrival of the state’s planned high-speed rail system. At roughly the midpoint between the Los Angeles area and the Bay Area, Fresno has been a source of enthusiastic support for the system and is planning a downtown station. City officials insist, though, that the new plans will enable downtown to thrive even if the system – which remains controversial – is never fully built.

This in a downtown that has, on more than one occasion, been nearly left for dead.

The centerpiece of the plan is the Fulton Street corridor, a 655-acre area that will see the most intensive development. The Fulton Corridor Plan calls for essentially a new skyline, made up of buildings up to 15 stories tall. Other areas of downtown would be limited to 10 stories. The latest catalytic project, now underway, is the reconfiguration of the Fulton Street pedestrian mall. Following a national trend, the street is being reopened to vehicular traffic.

The plans follow a form-based code drafted by lead planners Moule & Polyzoides, a New Urbanist planning and architecture firm. The plans go back to the past not only stylistically but also chronologically. They were first drafted in 2010 and 2011. The city then took a detour to invest resources in Fulton Street.

By the time that project was done, they embarked on a general plan update and wholesale rewrite of its 1962 zoning code, which Zack described as a “typical Euclidian code....amended 1000 times over.”

“When it was launched with the two plans back in 2010 or so, it was designed to be a standalone document, completely separate from our citywide zoning ordinance,” said Zack.

The city finished the general plan, code rewrite, and update of its zoning maps in 2015.

Approval of the downtown plans thus comes five years late – and exactly at the right time. They reflect the philosophy and use the language of the new zoning code to fit seamlessly into the city’s broader vision for growth.

“The decision was made to finish the big-picture city vision first and then close the loop with our downtown,” said Zack. “They didn’t want this nice new form-based code to be bogged down by plugging into that framework.”

While the business community has enthusiastically supported the plans, they have roused concerns among advocates of social justice. Ashley Werner, an attorney with the Fresno-based Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability, said that the dedication of resources

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>>> Revamp of Fresno Plans, Zoning Code Aims to Create ‘Next Great American Downtown’

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and focus on downtown could draw the city’s attention away from some of the city’s impoverished inner-suburban neighborhoods.

“Policy language that very specifically prioritized staff and city resources to implement projects on the Fulton corridor,” said Werner. “That means that other areas are not going to be prioritized. A chief concern of ours was that these plans would replicate a historic pattern of disinvestment.”

Werner said that the city has, in the past, neglected to seek state funding that would aid some of the city’s most distressed neighborhoods in the southeast and southwest.

Werner said that the downtown plans might also usher in gentrification and displacement of low-income residents. It’s a notion that would have been unthinkable even a few years ago. But, Werner said, if the plans work properly and the city’s economy continues to improve, the challenges of Los Angeles and San Francisco could yet make their way to the Central Valley.

“In the Central Valley there tends to be a narrative that gentrification and displacement are coastal phenomena,” said Werner. “Every successful example I’ve seen of revitalization has resulted in displacement.”

Werner said she was encouraged, though, by the inclusion of an anti-displacement task force in the downtown plan. The task force is charged with monitoring displacement threats and promoting policies to avert it. Werner also said that she hopes the city will earmark some city-owned downtown parcels for affordable housing.

“Those concerns are interesting. I think ultimately people will find that they are unwarranted,” said Zack. “This isn’t a binary choice of total abandonment or rapid gentrification

Zack noted that, no matter what happens in downtown Fresno, the city continues to promote growth of all said that the new general plan calls for half of the city’s growth to take place in the greater downtown, with the other half following traditional suburban development patterns.

and displacement.”

Zack noted that, no matter what happens in downtown Fresno, the city continues to promote growth of all kinds. He said that the new general plan calls for half of the city’s growth to take place in the greater downtown, with the other half following traditional suburban development patterns.

“The strategy we are utilizing to make that happen is not to clamp down on the outward growth so much as we are removing every barrier imaginable to the infill,” said Zack.

As for Fresno’s single biggest question mark – bigger, even, than whether the Grizzlies will have a winner season – Zack said, “we are building the next great American downtown regardless of high speed rail.” ■

Contacts & Resources

Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan (pdf)

<http://www.fresno.gov/NR/rdonlyres/70F76961-5F3C-463A-B2DD-9E3FF591FEE6/0/DNCP1072016WEB.pdf>

Downtown Development Code

<http://www.fresno.gov/Government/MayorsOffice/DowntownRevitalization/FresnoDowntownPlans/DevelopmentCode.htm>

Aaron Blair, President/CEO, Fresno Downtown Partnership, ablair@downtownfresno.org

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>>> Urban Laboratories of Democracy

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the Democratic convention. Trump's political base is anything but urban. It is white, older, exurban and rural, and angry. His supporters are nothing like the Manhattan social elite he has always aspired to be part of. (He lost his home county 82%-9%.) They are more like the Archie Bunkers he lived among – admittedly, as a rich kid – growing up in Queens.

On the campaign trail, Trump occasionally brought up issues of urban blight – especially in African-American neighborhoods – but he usually did it in an old-fashioned way that made a lot of political observers think he was simply dog-whistling his white supporters rather than actual appealing to blacks and other urbanites. And he never proposed any urban-centric policies, insisting instead – in surprisingly classic Republican fashion – that he would stimulate so much economic growth that everybody would benefit.

All of which probably means that the federal government won't be doing much of anything for cities over the next four years. Trump will try to revive American manufacturing with protectionist policies. He may seek to deport millions of immigrants, many of whom live in major cities. And in all likelihood he will otherwise be held hostage by the traditional tax-cutting rhetoric of the Republican Party, which will leave him no money to throw at the cities even if he wanted to.

Fortunately, this is a time of great energy, creativity, and prosperity for American cities. Just as states become laboratories of democracy when Ronald Reagan cut back the role of the federal government in the 1980s, now cities are becoming the urban laboratories of democracy, pilot-testing new policies and ideas that might later spread across the country to become commonplace.

Cities are at the epicenter of the greatest economic and social problem of our time -- the growing gap between rich and poor – and increasingly the solutions appear likely to come from the ground up rather than the top down.

Ironically, even as most of them are controlled by progressive Democrats, American cities are the engines of our nation's prosperity – and practical Republican business leaders understand this pattern. Metropolitan areas – led by cities and inner suburbs – are now generating most of the nation's growth in population, jobs, and wealth. This is even true in Texas, where most economic growth and virtually all economic growth is occurring in four big metropolitan areas even as the legislature is largely controlled by rural interests.

There is little reason to expect that will change under President Trump. Because of their density and flexibility, cities are at the epicenter of the tech innovation that is changing the way people live, travel, and work on a daily basis – innovation that is driving economic growth across the nation. Car-sharing services such as Uber began and thrived first in big cities and

now are expanding outward into suburbs, where they are gradually becoming part of the transportation system. The same is true for food delivery services, Amazon drones, and a host of other “disruptive” emerging businesses. And the educational institutions that incubate a lot of these innovations – such as our host institution, Rice University – are still located in the center of major cities. It's true that these emerging businesses don't create as many jobs as the old factories used to (not that new factories create many jobs these days for anybody other than robots), but they are at the cutting edge of the 21st Century economy and the urban-centric approach to innovation and adoption of new ideas isn't going to change.

Cities are also at the epicenter of the greatest economic and social problem of our time -- the growing gap between rich and poor – and increasingly the solutions appear likely to come from the ground up rather than the top down.

One characteristic of both Democratic and Republican

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>>> Urban Laboratories of Democracy

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approaches to growth and opportunity over the past few decades has been a top-down approach from Washington. If you want to grow the economy or expand economic opportunity, you do something big at the federal level – a huge jobs program, a huge tax cut. But such moves are increasingly hard to make in a polarized governmental system and because most of the big moves have already been made (huge tax cuts, for example), new moves increasingly occur only on the margins with limited effect. Trump will try to make a big economic move with protectionist tariffs, of course, but his own party is divided on them and it's likely that they'd create a deep recession in the short term because of the way the United States is integrated into the world economy.

On the ground in cities, however, it's different. Some of the solutions involve new ways to connect people to opportunities -- as the Upskill Houston efforts attempts to do by helping young adults to get the technical training they need to get good blue-collar jobs. More and more, you'll see cities and metro areas initiating these moves, in large part because that's where the jobs and people are located; and then the moves that work will be scaled across the country.

Similarly, it's clear that there is an increasing trend at the local level – and, to a lesser extent, at the state level -- toward New Deal-style economic policy that seeks to lift people up. Though it's going nowhere in Texas, for example, the move toward higher minimum wages is gaining traction across the country – and not just in blue states. Several red states have passed minimum wage increases at the ballot box –

Arizona approved a \$12 minimum wage yesterday – and cities are experimenting with a wide variety of minimum wage policies as well.

Though conservative thinkers argue that minimum wage stifles economic growth and kills jobs, the practical reality is that cities across the country will tinker with minimum wage systems, providing evidence for states and eventually the federal government as to what works and what doesn't. Unlike Congress or even state legislatures, cities don't have to come up with blunt-instrument solutions in order to win over ideological legislators. They can craft nuanced approaches to policy and – as many mayors have shown – use big data in clever ways to monitor the effectiveness of those policies.

The bottom line is that on domestic and economic policy in particular the federal government is increasingly irrelevant. As Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution likes to say, the federal government today is really just a health insurance company with an army. Whatever you think about Donald Trump as president – whether that inspires you or terrifies you – the federal government under any president has limited running room to deal with the fundamental issues of economic innovation and the rich-poor gap. Meanwhile – unlike during the “Laboratories of Democracy” era of the 1980s – most states are stuck on one side or the other of the red-blue ideological divide, pursuing predictable policies depending on which party controls the statehouse and the legislature. Which means that even with Donald Trump as president, the future of America belongs to the urban laboratories of democracy. ■



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>>> Big Land Use Ballot Yields Mixed Bag of Results

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RENT CONTROL & TENANTS RIGHTS

City of Alameda Measure L1

Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Shall the voters adopt the City's March 31, 2016 Rent Stabilization Ordinance, which (a) limits residential rent increases to once annually, (b) requires mediation for all residential rent increases above 5%, including binding decisions on rent increases for most rental units, (c) restricts reasons for evictions, (d) requires landlords to pay relocation fees when terminating certain tenancies, and (e) permits the City Council to amend the ordinance to address changing concerns and conditions?

Yes 72%

No 38%

City of Alameda Measure M1

Shall the City Charter be amended to (a) limit annual residential rent increases for certain units to 65% of the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index, (b) create an elected Rent Control Board separate from the City with authority to hire staff, impose fees on landlords for program funding and assess penalties, (c) limit the reasons for terminating tenancies and (d) require rental property owners to pay relocation fees to tenants when terminating certain tenancies?

Yes 34%

No 66%

Burlingame (San Mateo County) Measure R

Burlingame Community Protection Ordinance

The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote neighborhood and community stability, healthy housing, and affordability for renters in the City of Burlingame by controlling excessive rent increases and arbitrary evictions to the greatest extent allowable under California law, while ensuring Landlords a fair and reasonable return on their investment, and guaranteeing fair protections for renters, homeowners, and businesses. Limits rent increases on pre-1995 multifamily buildings to the Consumer Price Index increase (but not less than 1 or more than 4 percent). Establishes just-cause eviction rules for all rental property including single-family homes, condos and multi-family units, whenever constructed.

Yes 33%

No 67%

City of San Mateo Measure Q

Community Preservation and Fair Rent Charter Amendment

Shall the charter amendment adding Chapter XI to the San Mateo City Charter to enact rent regulations applicable to apartment housing with an initial certificate of occupancy dated before February 1, 1995; and just cause for eviction requirements applicable to apartment housing with an initial certificate of occupancy dated before the date the measure becomes effective; and establishing a Rental Housing Commission to administer and implement these regulations and requirements be adopted?

Yes 39%

No 61%

City of Mountain View Measure W

Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Shall a rent stabilization ordinance be adopted requiring a tenant-landlord dispute resolution program and binding arbitration for rent increase disputes exceeding 5% of base rent per 12-month period and service reductions for most multifamily rental units with a certificate of occupancy before February 1, 1995; prohibiting eviction of tenants without just cause or relocation assistance; prohibiting substantive changes for two years, and requiring a super majority City Council vote for substantive changes thereafter?

Yes 48%

No 52%

City of Mountain View Measure V

Rent Stabilization Ordinance

Shall a Rent Stabilization city charter amendment be adopted enacting rent regulation and prohibiting amendments except by Citywide election, with annual rent increases limited to the Consumer Price Index (minimum 2%, maximum 5%) for most multifamily rental units built before February 1, 1995; prohibiting evictions without just cause for rental units built before this measure becomes effective; creating a Rental Housing Committee authorized to enact regulations, hire staff, expend funds, and charge

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landlords fees to implement this amendment?

Yes 52%

No 48%

City of Oakland Measure JJ

Just Cause For Eviction and Rent Adjustment Ordinances

Placed on ballot by City Council; would amend Oakland’s Rent Adjustment Program. Shall Oakland’s Just Cause For Eviction and Rent Adjustment Ordinances be amended by: (1) extending just-cause eviction requirements from residential rental units offered for rent on or before October 14, 1980 to those approved for occupancy before December 31, 1995; and (2) requiring landlords to request approval from the City before increasing rents by more than the cost-of-living adjustment allowed by City law?

Yes 74%

No 26%

City of Richmond Measure L

Fair Rent, Just Cause for Eviction, and Homeowner Protection Ordinance

A proposed City of Richmond ordinance to establish rent control, a rent board, and just cause for eviction requirements in the City of Richmond. Voter initiative rolls back rents on pre-1995 multifamily apartments to July 2015 levels and limits future increases to the CPI. Imposes eviction controls on all rental units.

Yes 64%

No 36%

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Santa Clara County Measure A

To provide affordable local housing for vulnerable populations including veterans, seniors, the disabled, low and moderate income individuals or families, foster youth, victims of abuse, the homeless and individuals suffering from mental health or substance abuse illnesses, which housing may include supportive mental health and substance abuse services, shall the County of Santa Clara issue up to \$950 million in general obligation bonds to acquire or improve real property subject to independent citizen oversight and regular audits?

Yes 67%

No 33%

Alameda County Measure A1

Affordable Housing Bond

To provide affordable local housing and prevent displacement of vulnerable populations, including low- and moderate-income households, veterans, seniors, and persons with disabilities; provide supportive housing for homeless people countywide; and help low- and middle-income households purchase homes and stay in their communities; shall the County of Alameda issue up to \$580 million in general obligation bonds to acquire or improve real property, subject to independent citizen oversight and regular audits? Percentage needed to pass: 66.6667%.

Yes 72%

No 28%

City of Berkeley Measure Z1

Low Income Housing Authorization

Shall any federal, state or local public entity be empowered to develop, construct or acquire an additional 500 units of low-rent housing in the City of Berkeley for persons of low income?

Yes 82%

No 18%

City of Berkeley Measure U1 (City-Sponsored)

Rental Unit Business License Tax

Shall an ordinance permanently increasing the gross receipts tax on owners of five or more residential units from 1.081% to 2.880%, with certain exceptions, prohibiting landlords from passing the tax on to sitting tenants, and directing the Housing Advisory Commission to make recommendations on funding and programs to increase affordable housing and protect Berkeley residents from homelessness, be adopted?

Yes 74%

No 26%

City of Berkeley Measure DD

Rental Unit Business License Tax (Voter Initiative)

Shall an ordinance permanently increasing the gross receipts tax on owners of three or more residential rental

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units from 1.081% to 1.5%, prohibiting landlords from passing the tax on to sitting tenants except as allowed by law, and authorizing the Council to create a citizen panel to make recommendations on increasing affordable housing and protecting residents from homelessness be adopted?

Yes 30%

No 70%

City of Los Angeles Measure HHH Homelessness Reduction and Prevention, Housing, and Facilities Bond

To provide safe, clean affordable housing for the homeless and for those in danger of becoming homeless, such as battered women and their children, veterans, seniors, foster youth, and the disabled; and provide facilities to increase access to mental health care, drug and alcohol treatment, and other services; shall the City of Los Angeles issue \$1.2 billion in general obligation bonds, with citizen oversight and annual financial audits?

Yes 76%

No 24%

City of Los Angeles Measure JJJ Affordable Housing and Labor Standards Related to City Planning (“Build a Better LA”)

Shall an ordinance: 1) requiring that certain residential development projects provide for affordable housing and comply with prevailing wage, local hiring and other labor standards; 2) requiring the City to assess the impacts of community plan changes on affordable housing and local jobs; 3) creating an affordable housing incentive program for developments near major transit stops; and 4) making other changes; be adopted?

Yes 64%

No 36%

City and County of San Francisco Proposition C Loans to Finance Acquisition and Rehabilitation of Affordable Housing

Shall the City amend the Charter to increase affordable housing requirements for private developers of new market-rate housing projects of 25 or more units until the Board of Supervisors passes an ordinance changing those requirements and also authorize the Board of Supervisors

to change affordable housing requirements by ordinance?

Yes 68%

No 32%

City of San Diego Measure M Affordable Housing: Increasing the Limit on the Number of Units the City and Certain Public Agencies are Allowed to Help Develop

Shall the voters increase by 38,680 the maximum number of housing units the City and certain other public agencies are allowed to help develop, construct, or acquire for people with low incomes, without this ballot measure approving specific housing units, providing funds for development, removing requirements that otherwise apply, or taking any other action?

Yes 65%

No 35%

City of Santa Monica Measure GSH

To maintain and improve Santa Monica community services including support for preservation of affordable housing, reducing homelessness, school repair and improvement, education of Santa Monica children and students, and other general fund services, shall an ordinance be adopted to increase by one-half percent Santa Monica’s transactions and use tax, subject to independent annual audits, all funds used locally, no money going to Sacramento, raising approximately \$16 million annually, until ended by the voters?

City and County of San Francisco Proposition J Funding for Homelessness and Transportation

Shall the City amend the Charter to create a Homeless Housing and Services Fund, which would provide services to the homeless including housing and Navigation Centers, programs to prevent homelessness and assistance in transitioning out of homelessness by allocating \$50 million per year for 24 years, adjusted annually; and create a Transportation Improvement Fund, which would be used to improve the city’s transportation network by allocating \$101.6 million per year for 24 years, adjusted annually? Funded by Proposition K, a 0.75% sales tax increase.

Yes 66%

No 34%

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City and County of San Francisco Proposition P Competitive Bidding for Affordable Housing Projects on City-Owned Property

Shall the City be prohibited from proceeding with an affordable housing project on City-owned property unless the Mayor’s Office of Housing and Community Development receives at least three proposals; and shall the City incorporate into City law most current criteria for selecting a developer for affordable housing projects on City-owned property?

Yes 33%
No 67%

City and County of San Francisco Proposition U Affordable Housing Requirements for Market-Rate Development Projects

Shall the City increase the income eligibility limit for on-site rental units for all new and existing affordable housing units to make them affordable for households earning up to 110% of the area median income?

Yes 36%
No 64%

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District 1 Measure C1 Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit)

To preserve essential local public transportation services, including those for youth, commuters, seniors, and people with disabilities, while keeping fares reasonable, shall the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District extend its existing 8 dollars per month parcel tax at current levels for 20 years with no increase in tax rate, raising approximately 30 million dollars annually, with independent oversight and all money spent locally? Percentage needed to pass: 2/3

Bay Area Rapid Transit District Measure RR (Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco Counties) Bond Measure: Safety, Reliability and Traffic Relief

To keep BART safe; prevent accidents/breakdowns/delays; relieve overcrowding; reduce traffic congestion/pollution; improve earthquake safety and access for seniors/disabled by replacing and upgrading 90 miles of severely worn tracks; tunnels damaged by water intrusion;

44-year-old train control systems; and other deteriorating infrastructure, shall the Bay Area Rapid Transit District issue \$3.5 billion of bonds for acquisition or improvement of real property subject to independent oversight and annual audits? Percentage needed to pass: 66.6667%

Yes 70%
No 30%

Contra Costa County Measure X Transportation Authority

To implement a Transportation Expenditure Plan to continue: Repairing potholes/fixing roads; Improving BART capacity/reliability; Improving Highways 680, 80, 24, and 4; Enhancing bus/transit including for seniors and people with disabilities; Increasing bicycle/pedestrian safety; Improving air quality; Reducing traffic; shall voters adopt the ordinance augmenting the sales tax by ½% raising ninety-seven million dollars for transportation improvements annually for 30 years with independent oversight, audits, and all money benefitting local residents?

Los Angeles County Measure M

Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan

To improve freeway traffic flow/safety; repair potholes/sidewalks; repave local streets; earthquake-retrofit bridges; synchronize signals; keep senior/disabled/student fares affordable; expand rail/subway/bus systems; improve job/school/airport connections; and create jobs; shall voters authorize a Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan through a ½ ¢ sales tax and continue the existing ½ ¢ traffic relief tax until voters decide to end it, with independent audits/oversight and funds controlled locally? (See prior CP&DR [coverage](#).)

Yes 70%
No 30%

Placer County Measure M

Shall Placer County reconfigure the 80/65 Interchange to relieve congestion; better maintain roads countywide; provide dedicated funding for rural road pothole repair; widen roadways/expand transit; expand Highway 65 in each direction; provide safe routes to school; add seniors/disabled persons transit; widen Baseline Road and build

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Placer Parkway creating I-80 alternatives, by establishing a one-half cent sales tax, limited to 30 years, raising \$53 million annually, with independent audits, citizens' oversight, and increasing eligibility for state/federal matching?

Yes 64%
No 36%

Sacramento County Measure B The Road Maintenance & Traffic Relief Act

To: Fill potholes and repave streets; Repair deteriorating bridges; Relieve traffic on roads and freeways; Build a new expressway between Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova and Folsom; Extend Light Rail toward the Airport and Elk Grove; Support Light Rail and bus operations, maintenance, and security; and Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety; Shall the ordinance enacting a 30-year countywide one half cent sales tax, raising approximately \$100 million annually, with independent oversight and audits, be adopted?

Yes 65%
No 35%

San Diego County Measure A Road Repair, Transit, Traffic Relief, Safety and Water Quality Measure

An ordinance be adopted to: repair roads, deteriorating bridges; relieve congestion; provide every community funds for pothole/street repairs; expand public transit, including improved services for seniors, disabled, students, veterans; reduce polluted runoff; preserve open space to protect water quality/reduce wildfires by enacting, with independent oversight/audits, a 40-year, half-cent local sales tax (\$308 million annually) that Sacramento cannot take away.

Yes 57%
No 43%

San Luis Obispo County Measure J Transportation

To improve our region's transportation system by: Fixing potholes, repaving local streets, relieving traffic congestion; Improving street, highway and bridge safety; Making bike and transit improvements within and between communities; Increasing senior, veterans, disabled and student transit;

and Providing safe routes to school. Shall San Luis Obispo County voters enact a half cent transportation sales tax, providing \$25,000,000 annually for nine (9) years, requiring independent citizens' oversight, where all funds stay local and cannot be taken by the State?

Yes 65%
No 35%

San Mateo County Measure K

Extension of Measure A, approved by voters in 2012) half-cent sales tax that has generated approximately \$80 million annually.

Yes 70%
No 30%

Santa Clara County Measure B Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

To relieve traffic, repair potholes; shall VTA enact a 30-year half-cent sales tax to: Repair streets, fix potholes in all 15 cities; Finish BART extension to downtown San Jose, Santa Clara; Improve bicycle/pedestrian safety, especially near schools; Increase Caltrain capacity, easing highway congestion, improving safety at crossings; Relieve traffic on all 9 expressways, key highway interchanges; Enhance transit for seniors, students, disabled; Mandating annual audits by independent citizens watchdog committee to ensure accountability. Two-thirds approval needed.

Yes 71%
No 29%

City of Berkeley Bond Measure T1

Shall the City of Berkeley issue general obligation bonds not exceeding \$100,000,000 to repair, renovate, replace, or reconstruct the City's aging infrastructure and facilities, including sidewalks, storm drains, parks, streets, senior and recreation centers, and other important City facilities and buildings? Financial Implications: The average annual cost over the 40-year period the bonds are outstanding would be approximately \$21, \$90, and \$128, respectively, for homes with assessed valuations of \$100,000, \$425,000 and \$600,000. Two-thirds approval needed.

Yes 86%
No 24%

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City of Oakland Measure KK Investing in Oakland’s Infrastructure and Affordable Housing

To improve public safety and invest in neighborhoods throughout Oakland by re-paving streets to remove potholes, rebuilding cracked and deteriorating sidewalks, funding bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, funding affordable housing for Oaklanders, and providing funds for facility improvements, such as, neighborhood recreation centers, playgrounds, and libraries, shall the City of Oakland issue \$600 million in bonds, subject to independent citizen oversight and regular audits?

Yes 82%
No 18%

Santa Cruz County Measure D Safety, Pothole Repair, Traffic Relief, Transit Improvement Measure.

In order to: improve children’s safety around schools; repair potholes; repave streets; improve traffic flow on Highway 1; maintain senior/disabled transit; reduce global warming pollution by providing transportation options like sidewalks, buses, bike lanes, trails; preserve rail options; shall Santa Cruz County voters adopt an ordinance establishing a half-cent sales tax for 30 years, raising approximately \$17 million annually, requiring citizen oversight, independent audits, and funds spent locally?

Yes 67%
No 33%

GENERAL PLANS & URBAN GROWTH

Sonoma County Measure K Community Separators Protection Ordinance

In order to preserve rural open space and agricultural land, maintain community identities, and prevent sprawl, shall the “Community Separators Protection Ordinance” be adopted to amend the Sonoma County General Plan to require voter approval of changes to the General Plan that increase the allowed density or intensity of development within Community Separators until December 31, 2036?

Yes 81%
No 19%

City of Encinitas Measure T “At Home in Encinitas” Plan

Shall City Council Resolution No. 2016-52 and Ordinance No. 2016-04, which collectively update the City’s General Plan Housing Element, amend related General Plan provisions, and amend Specific Plans, Zoning Code, Zoning Map, Municipal Code, and Local Coastal Program, in an effort to comply with State law, incentivize greater housing affordability, implement rules to protect the character of existing neighborhoods, maintain local control of Encinitas zoning, and resolve existing lawsuits, be adopted?

Yes 44%
No 56%

City of Cotati Measure Q Renew Urban Growth Boundary

Shall an ordinance amending the General Plan of the City of Cotati to extend the current Urban Growth Boundary for an additional 30 years be adopted?

Yes 69%
No 31%

City of Costa Mesa Measure Y City of Costa Mesa, An Initiative to Require Voter Approval on Certain Development Projects

Shall the ordinance to require voter approval of development projects that require adoption, amendment, change or replacement of the General Plan, the Zoning Code, a specific plan, or an overlay plan, and that generates over 200 additional trips, increases intersection volume/capacity, changes the intersection utilization/level of service, adds 40 or more dwelling units, adds 10,000 sq.’ of non-residential use, or changes a public use to a private use under specified conditions, be adopted?

Yes 68%
No 32%

City of Costa Mesa Measure Z Sensible Community Development and Development-Funded Open Space and Recreation

Shall the Costa Mesa Measure for Sensible Community Development and Development-Funded Open Space and Recreation, which ratifies the City’s existing land use

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regulations, ensures that approximately 25% of the State Developmental Hospital on Harbor Boulevard would be zoned as passive or recreational open space, and establishes a fee paid for by developers for the purpose of funding new active recreation, open space, and public park facilities within the City, be adopted?

Yes 55%
No 45%

City of Del Mar Measure R

Voter Approval of Commercial Development Initiative

Shall the ordinance which proposes to amend the Del Mar Community Plan, Housing Element, and Municipal Code to require voter approval for certain development projects be adopted?

Yes 52%
No 48%

Encinitas Measure T

Housing Element

Shall City Council Resolution No. 2016-52 and Ordinance No. 2016-04, which collectively update the City's General Plan Housing Element, amend related General Plan provisions, and amend Specific Plans, Zoning Code, Zoning Map, Municipal Code, and Local Coastal Program, in an effort to comply with State law, incentivize greater housing affordability, implement rules to protect the character of existing neighborhoods, maintain local control of Encinitas zoning, and resolve existing lawsuits, be adopted?

Yes
No

City of Gilroy Measure H

Urban Growth Boundary

Shall an ordinance be adopted to amend the Gilroy General Plan to add an Urban Growth Boundary line (UGB) to the General Plan Land Use Plan Map, designate lands outside the UGB as Open Space and prohibit urban development on such lands, and provide that (with limited exceptions) such restrictions may not be amended or repealed until December 31, 2040 without a vote of the people?"

Yes 66%
No 34%

City of Milpitas Measure I

Urban Growth Boundary

Shall an ordinance that amends the Milpitas General Plan Land Use Element to extend until December 31, 2038 an Urban Growth Boundary near the base of the Milpitas foothills, that would limit development within Milpitas to the valley floor and the base of the foothills by prohibiting Milpitas from providing city services to new land use developments in the hillside area, be adopted?

Yes 73%
No 27%

City of Milpitas Measure J

Hillside Combining District

Shall an ordinance, requiring until December 31, 2038, any amendments to the existing "Hillside Combining District" Ordinance and any amendments to the general plan land use designation for lands currently designated as "Hillside" property be approved by the voters before becoming effective, be adopted?

Yes No

City of Milpitas Measure K

General Plan

Shall an ordinance amending the City of Milpitas General Plan be adopted to mandate that any attempt to rezone parks, parklands or open space to residential, commercial or industrial, or any proposal for residential, commercial or industrial development in parks, parkland or open space, must be placed before Milpitas voters and secure two-thirds support in the City's next general election?

Yes No

City of Morgan Hill Measure S

Shall a measure be adopted to amend the Morgan Hill General Plan and Municipal Code to update the City's voter-approved Residential Development Control System (RDSCS) to extend it to 2035, establish a population ceiling of 58,200, with a slower rate of growth than currently exists, and improve policies to maintain neighborhood character, encourage more efficient land use, conserve water, and preserve open space?

Yes 78%
No 22%

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City of Santa Monica Measure LV

Shall the City's General Plan and Municipal Code be amended to require: a new permit process for major development projects exceeding base sizes or heights of 32-36 feet, with exceptions such as single unit dwellings and some affordable housing projects; voter approval of major development projects and development agreements, excluding affordable housing and moderate income and senior housing projects, among others; and voter approval of changes to City land use and planning policy documents?

Yes 44%

No 56%

PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE

County of Los Angeles Measure A

Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks, Open Space, Beaches, Rivers Protection, and Water Conservation Measure

To replace expiring local funding for safe, clean neighborhood/ city/ county parks; increase safe playgrounds, reduce gang activity; keep neighborhood recreation/ senior centers, drinking water safe; protect beaches, rivers, water resources, remaining natural areas/ open space; shall 1.5 cents be levied annually per square foot of improved property in Los Angeles County, with bond authority, requiring citizen oversight, independent audits, and funds used locally?

Yes 73%

No 27%

County of Napa Measure Z

Water, Parks and Open Space, Restoration and Preservation Measure

To protect drinking water by preserving and restoring watersheds, rivers, creeks; protect natural open spaces and wildlife habitat; reduce wildfire risk; and maintain parks and trails; shall Napa County enact a 1/4 percent sales tax for the Napa County Regional Park and Open Space District raising an estimated eight million dollars annually for fourteen years with citizen oversight, annual audits, and funds that cannot be taken by the State?

Yes 62%

No 48%

County of Ventura Measure C

Shall the current ordinance requiring a vote of the people for changes to Open Space, Agricultural and Rural General Plan land use designations, goals and policies in the unincorporated area of the County be extended from 2020 through 2050, with specified modifications, such as permitting changes without a vote to allow for up to 12 acres of land to be used for food processing?

Yes 59%

No 41%

County of Ventura Measure F

Shall the current ordinance requiring a vote of the people for changes to Open Space, Agricultural and Rural General Plan land use designations, goals and policies in the unincorporated area of the County be extended from 2020 through 2036, with specified modifications, such as permitting changes without a vote to allow for redesignation of land adjacent to certain school sites and up to 225 acres of land to be used for food processing?

Yes 46%

No 54%

SOAR-Related municipal measures, some of which concern urban growth boundaries are on ballots in the following cities:

City of Fillmore Measure A

CURB Extension Until 2050

Shall the ordinance initiated by residents extending the expiration date of the City Urban Restriction Boundary line from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2050, removes the exemption for schools and government facilities such that they must be built within the CURB, and requires an election to develop 20 acres of land beyond the CURB and the land must be fallow of agricultural use for 4 years be approved?

Yes 57%

No 43%

City of Moorpark Measure E

Moorpark Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources – 2050 Initiative

Shall the Ordinance entitled “Moorpark Save Open-space and Agricultural Resources – 2050 initiative” (“Moorpark

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SOAR – 2050”) be adopted to extend with certain amendments the provisions of the 1999 voter-approved Moorpark SOAR from December 31, 2020 to December 31, 2050 and continue to prohibit the City of Moorpark from permitting urban services or urbanized uses of land outside the current Moorpark City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB) with certain exceptions during that extended period?

Yes 73%
No 27%

City of Camarillo Measure J

Shall an ordinance be adopted approving an initiative ordinance amending Chapter 3.0 of the Camarillo General Plan to add development restrictions within an area designated the Conejo Creek Voter Participation Area and to amend and extend the life of the development restrictions outside the Camarillo Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB)?

Yes 73%
No 27%

City of Oxnard Measure K

Shall the Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) Ordinance be extended, maintaining a City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB); prohibiting urban development outside of the CURB until December 31, 2030, unless approved by the voters; maintaining a City Buffer Boundary (CBB); and prohibiting changing the designation of land within the CBB that is designated ‘Agriculture’ in the Oxnard 2030 General Plan, unless approved by the voters?

Yes 70%
No 30%

City of Oxnard Measure L

Shall the Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) Ordinance be extended, maintaining a City Urban Restriction Boundary (CURB); prohibiting urban development outside of the CURB until December 31, 2050, unless approved by the voters; maintaining a City Buffer Boundary (CBB); and prohibiting changing the designation of land within the CBB that is designated ‘Agriculture’ in the Oxnard 2030 General Plan, unless

approved by the voters?

Yes 75%
No 25%

City of San Buenaventura Measure P

Shall the initiative ordinance extending open-space, agriculture, and hillside land use changes by voter approval to 2050 be approved?

Yes 72%
No 28%

City of Santa Paula Measure U

CURB and 81-Acre Initiative Extension Until 2050

Shall an ordinance initiated by residents that expands the City Urban Restriction Boundary to include 53.75 acres in the southwest portion of the City, extends the expiration of the City Urban Restriction Boundary from 2020 to December 31, 2050, extends the expiration of the 81-Acre Initiative from 2025 to December 31, 2050, and makes other minor textual revisions to the CURB be adopted?

Yes 55%
No 45%

City of Thousand Oaks Measure W

Shall the ordinance extending the City Urban Restriction Boundary Ordinance, and extending the ordinance requiring voter approval of any General Plan designation change from the Existing Parks, Golf Courses, and Open Space category, from December 31, 2030 to December 31, 2050 be adopted?

Yes 76%
No 24%

City of Costa Mesa Measure Z

City of Costa Mesa, Measure for Sensible Community Development and Development-Funded Open Space and Recreation

Shall the Costa Mesa Measure for Sensible Community Development and Development-Funded Open Space and Recreation, which ratifies the City’s existing land use regulations, ensures that approximately 25% of the State Developmental Hospital on Harbor Boulevard would be zoned as passive or recreational open space, and establishes a fee paid for by developers for the purpose of

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funding new active recreation, open space, and public park facilities within the City, be adopted?

City of Santa Clara Measure R Protection of Parkland and Open Space

Shall Section 714.1 of the Santa Clara City Charter be added to provide that no City owned land used for park or recreational purposes, including the Ulistac Natural Area and the Santa Clara Soccer Park, shall be sold or disposed of by the City without being authorized by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote and that development upon such property shall be subject to referendum?

City of San Diego Measure J Lease Revenue from Mission Bay Park

Shall Charter section 55.2 be amended to: increase, from 25% to 35%, the allocation of annual Mission Bay Park lease revenues exceeding \$20 million, for capital improvements in San Diego Regional Parks; allow Council to add City-owned parkland to Mission Bay Park's boundaries; combine and coordinate construction of Mission Bay Park improvements identified in this section; and extend operation of this section until 2069?

Santa Monica Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (Los Angeles County) Area 1 Measure GG; Area 2 Measure FF

To maintain and conserve local open space, wildlife corridors, and parklands; acquire and protect additional lands from development; improve fire prevention including high fire alert patrols and brush clearing; protect water quality in local creeks; and increase park ranger safety patrols; shall Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority implement a \$35 special tax for ten years only, providing \$995,000 annually with all funds spent locally in the Santa Monica Mountains and Hollywood Hills east of 405 freeway, and requiring independent citizen oversight audits? To maintain and conserve local open space, wildlife corridors, and parklands; acquire and protect additional lands from development; improve fire prevention including high fire alert patrols and brush clearing; protect water quality in local creeks; and increase park ranger safety patrols; shall Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority implement a \$15 special tax for ten years only, providing \$241,000 annually with all funds spent locally

in the hillside communities of Woodland Hills, Encino, and Tarzana, and requiring independent citizen oversight audits?

SPECIFIC PLANS & PROJECT-SPECIFIC MEASURES

San Diego County Measure B Lilac Hills Specific Plan

Shall this Initiative be adopted for the purpose of amending the County General Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Code of Regulatory Ordinances and approving the Lilac Hills Ranch Specific Plan ("Plan")? The Plan provides for the development of a 608-acre master-planned community including 1,746 dwelling units, three commercial centers, a public park, 10 private parks and 16 miles of trails. The project site is generally located north of Escondido and east of I-15 in the unincorporated area of North San Diego County.

Yes 36% No 64%

City of Beverly Hills Measure HH Hilton Condominium Tower Initiative

Shall an ordinance be adopted allowing a 26 story (345 feet) residential building instead of two residential buildings of 8 stories (101 feet) and 18 stories (218 feet); increasing open space from approximately 1.25 acres to 1.7 acres for use as a private garden that is generally open to the public subject to reasonable restrictions determined by the property owner; prohibiting any discretionary architectural review; and reducing graywater use requirements?

Yes 45% No 55%

City of Cupertino Measure C

Shall an initiative ordinance be adopted amending Cupertino's General Plan to limit redevelopment of the Vallco Shopping District, limit building heights along major mixed-use corridors, increase to 45 feet the maximum building height in the Neighborhoods, limit lot coverages for large projects, establish new setbacks and building planes on major thoroughfares, and require voter approval for any changes to these provisions?

Yes 40% No 60%

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City of Cupertino Measure D Vallico Town Center Specific Plan

Shall an initiative be adopted enacting the Vallico Town Center Specific Plan for the 58-acre Vallico Shopping District Special Area requiring residential (approximately 389-800 units, including approximately 20% senior housing), office (2,000,000 sf), commercial (640,000 sf), hotel, park, civic/educational uses; requiring funding/community benefits for transportation (approximately \$30,000,000), schools (approximately \$40,000,000), green roof (approximately 30 acres), recycled water; granting initial entitlements; establishing development standards and limited future approval process; and making related Cupertino General Plan and Municipal Code amendments?

Yes 45%
No 55%

City of Cypress Measure GG City of Cypress, Cypress Town Center and Commons Specific Plan

Shall an ordinance that approves the “Cypress Town Center and Commons Specific Plan” to allow for development of a town center, single-family and multi-family housing, commercial/senior housing and a public park on portions of Los Alamitos Race Course, the former Cypress Golf Club and adjacent properties, together with related general plan and specific plan amendments and zone changes, be adopted?

Yes 49% **No 51%**

City of Livermore Measure FF

Springtown Golf Course Open Space Ballot Initiative

Shall the ordinance affirming and readopting the open space designation “OSP Parks, Trail Ways, Recreation Corridors and Protected Areas” in Land Use Element for the 2003-2025 City of Livermore General Plan for the Springtown Golf Course, except for the Springtown Library and the Springtown Association parcel, be adopted?

City of San Diego Measure C Downtown Stadium Initiative

Should the measure be adopted to: increase San Diego’s hotel occupancy tax by 6% to build a City-owned downtown professional football stadium and convention

center project, and fund tourism marketing; effect the project financing, design, construction, use, management, and maintenance, including a \$650,000,000 contribution and 30-year commitment by a professional football entity; end Tourism Marketing District assessments; adopt a development ordinance, and related land use, sign, and zoning laws?

Yes 43%
No 57%

City of San Diego Measure D Tax and Facilities Initiative (“The Citizens Plan”)

Should the measure be adopted to: among other provisions, increase San Diego’s hotel occupancy tax up to 5%; end Tourism Marketing District; allow hoteliers to create assessment districts and use hotel occupancy taxes for a downtown convention center and not a stadium; prohibit onsite expansion of existing convention center; create downtown overlay zone for convention and sports facilities; create environmental processes; and allow Qualcomm stadium property’s sale for educational and park uses?

Yes 40%
No 60%

City and County of San Francisco Proposition O Office Development in Candlestick Point and Hunters Point

Shall the City permanently exempt new office space on Candlestick Point and most of the former Navy shipyard at Hunters Point from the City’s annual 950,000-square-foot limit, and provide that any new office space in this project area would not count toward the annual limit that applies in the rest of the City?

Yes 52%
No 48%

MISCELLANEOUS

City of Albany Measure N1 Changes to Section 20.28.040 of the Albany Municipal Code “Measure D” - Parking Requirements

Shall an ordinance authorizing the Albany City Council to amend the residential parking requirements established

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by Measure D (enacted by the Albany voters in 1978), after following the normal procedures for amending City Zoning Ordinances, be adopted?

City and County of San Francisco Proposition E Responsibility for Maintaining Street Trees and Surrounding Sidewalks

Shall the City amend the Charter to transfer responsibility from property owners to the City for maintaining trees on sidewalks around their property as well as sidewalks damaged by the trees, and pay for this by setting aside \$19 million per year from its General Fund, adjusted annually based on City revenues?

Yes 79% No 21%

City and County of San Francisco Proposition M Housing and Development Commission

Shall the City amend the Charter to create the Housing and Development Commission to oversee two new departments (the Department of Economic and Workforce Development and the Department of Housing and Community Development) that would take over the duties of the Office of Economic and Workforce Development and the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development, which would cease to exist?

Yes 44% No 56%

City and County of San Francisco Proposition X Preserving Space for Neighborhood Arts, Small Businesses and Community Services in Certain Neighborhoods

Shall the City require developers of projects in parts of the Mission and South of Market neighborhoods to build replacement space if they remove production, distribution and repair uses of 5,000 square feet or more, institutional community uses of 2,500 square feet or more, or arts activities uses of any size, and to obtain a conditional use authorization before changing the property's use?

Yes 60% No 40%

Monterey County Measure Z Oil And Gas Drilling Operations Initiative

Shall an initiative amending the Monterey County General Plan, Local Coastal Program, and Fort Ord Master Plan to: (1) prohibit the use of land within the County's unincorporated (non-city) areas for hydraulic fracturing treatments ("fracking"), acid well stimulation treatments, and other well stimulation treatments; (2) prohibit new and phase out existing land uses that utilize oil and gas wastewater injection and impoundment; and, (3) prohibit the drilling of new oil and gas wells in the County's unincorporated areas be adopted?

Yes 56%
No 44%

City Of Soledad Measure F Transient Occupancy Tax

Shall Section 3.16.020 of Chapter 3.16 of the Soledad Municipal Code be amended to increase the existing transient occupancy tax, charged only to occupants of City hotels, from nine percent (9%) to twelve percent (12%), increasing the tax collected by an estimated \$20,000 for a new estimated annual total of \$100,000, with no termination date, to continue to provide funding for essential services such as police, fire, street repair, park maintenance and community programs?

Auburn Measure J Hotel Tax Increase

Shall an ordinance be adopted to amend the Auburn Municipal Code to amend the definition of "operator", so the tax is collected by all persons receiving consideration from the rental, including on-line hotel brokers and vacation rental agencies and shall the rate of the TOT be increased to 10%?

Yes 56%
No 44%

Calexit in Reverse

A New Yorker, one whose favorite pastime was building skyscrapers before he turned to statecraft, has bewilderingly captured the hearts of the American suburbs, exurbs, and small towns. Yes, this election hinged on race. But it also hinged on geography. While traffic of all sorts — foot, pedal, taxi, subway — rumbles along below the window of his penthouse, the nation's wide-open spaces and moribund towns cheer for the change they have wrought.

And what of California? What of mid-rise urbanism, mid-range density, the blue ocean, and the 900 miles of blue coastline against which it crashes? What of the 60% of us who envisioned a different four years?

A California secession movement arose within hours of Trump's victory. It even has a cute, hashtagable name: Calexit. As much as this prospect may appeal, we all know it's an emotional salve and not a solution. If I knew how to navigate the Constitution well enough to permit secession, there are probably a few other changes I'd make first. A certain Electoral College system comes to mind.

A far more powerful and far more realistic option occurs to me. We should not leave the United States. We should do what we have always done: invite the United States to come to us.

Donald Trump's election reveals that a long-developing trend has now become an axiom: the "sorting" of Americans is essentially complete. America's open interstate borders have enabled like-minded citizens to group together in places of their choosing. Broadly speaking, liberals have moved to cities and coastal states while conservatives have remained in the Heartland — effectively gobbling up electoral votes (and House districts) in the process. Structurally, "sorting" gave us the discrepancy between Trump's electoral victory and Clinton's popular victory. Culturally, it leads to the gross misunderstandings between

so-called Red and Blue America.

One strategy for a Democratic resurgence is for Blue voters to [move to swing states](#). It's a clever idea for the adventurous. Anyone who wants to wave the flag of progressivism in Columbus, Durham, or Des Moines has my respect. But I don't think anyone should have to uproot themselves for the sake of a political strategy in a free country. And it doesn't solve the clear and present discomfort, disenfranchisement, and, possibly, danger that many Blue voters now feel.

If Donald Trump threatens to pull the nation back into the past, I suggest that California remains — as ever — its future.

The vast majority of my 40 million neighbors are diverse, embracing, industrious, and progressive. (Some of them are undocumented — so what?) As is often cited, California has assets most countries — possibly all countries — can only dream of, foremost being its \$2.5 trillion economy. While the presidential campaign lamented the demise of old-school factory jobs in the Midwest, California has developed companies that make 20th century steel concerns look like lemonade stands. Iowa can only dream of our crop output.

From Apple, Google, and Tesla on down, California's future seems pretty secure. (Though, terrifyingly, Trump's victory could [undercut](#) the tech industry, which is the economic triumph of our time.) I happen to think that Hyperloop is [silly](#), but if it takes off, I'll be the first one to cheer. We have media, science, medicine, finance, and, yes, good old-fashioned manufacturing. What's the country's No. 1 manufacturing county? Oh yeah, it's *Los Angeles*.

Nobody took America. It's been right here all along. And there is no superlative that can fully describe California's opportunities to whomever wants to enjoy this version of the American dream.

We have the wealth and tect but knows how to make

Nobody took America. It's been right here all along. And there is no superlative that can fully describe California's opportunities to whomever wants to enjoy this version of the American dream.

Calexit in Reverse

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incremental strides. We have the best kind of diversity.

We have all of this and more. Except for two complications.

First, California cannot currently house all the people it has. Residents and businesses alike are paying exorbitant rents, especially in coastal cities. Rents eat into our economic power, limit companies' hiring options, decimate local multiplier effects, and essentially pit neighbor against neighbor in the search for shelter.

Second, California has traffic.

Fortunately, while the rest of the nation was electing Donald Trump, Californians took strides — some small, some large — to address at least one of these problems. In local [elections](#), Los Angeles County passed Measure M, which, at \$120 billion, is probably the largest transportation funding package in the history of the free world. The Bay Area voted for sorely needed funds for BART. Sacramento's transpiration measure failed, and so did San Diego's. It's worth noting, though, that all of these measures required two-thirds majorities. They will be reconfigured and they will find their voters (as Los Angeles did after the 2012 defeat of Measure R).

As for housing, that's where California's planners come in. The cause of smart infill development — replete with all the urban amenities and efficiencies that should accompany it — is possibly the only thing that lies between California and its full potential. On that front, yesterday's votes were mixed. Santa Monica rejected the restrictive Measure LV, and affordable housing measures passed throughout the Bay Area. And yet many cities adopted or strengthened urban growth boundaries — without necessarily embracing the

infill development to go along with it. Whatever voters say in a given election, planners need to keep fighting for the cause of density. And they need to promote their work. If nothing else, that is the lesson they can learn from Donald Trump.

And what of the environmental impact of more Californians and the development to contain them? Well, urban living is inherently more efficient than its alternatives. And we have regulations. Senate Bill 375 in particular directs us to build in such a way that we reduce the state's per capita carbon footprint. CEQA does some good and might yet do more if it's ever reformed. That still leaves the problem of water. Even then, dense infill development consumes less water per capita than old suburban development does.

Two days ago, these efforts were just common sense policies for a vibrant, progressive state. Today, for everyone out there who seeks the embrace and promise of California, they are morally imperative.

I suspect that the new regime in Washington is not going to make things easy on us. Trump [willfully mischaracterized](#) cities (including his own) in the campaign, demonizing them to rural and Rust Belt crowds. And, as CP&DR Publisher Bill Fulton [notes](#), Trump will surely betray cities as often as he can with the powers of his office. That's OK. We just have to work harder, accept the occasional sacrifice, and love each other a little bit more.

So, let's not break away from America. Let's make sure California remains the best of America.

– JOSH STEPHENS | NOV 20, 2016 ■

