THE COALITION OF LABOR, AGRICULTURE, AND BUSINESS

COLAB

San Luis Obispo County

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2014 NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 6

GUEST EDITORIAL:

THE CURRENT PASO BASIN LEGISLATION

We received permission to publish the thoughtful guest editorial reproduced below. COLAB is a very broad coalition and not all members of COLAB will agree with every point. However it is a very concise and thought provoking statement of the current situation.

EMBRACE, EXTEND, EXTINGUISH

By Publius

It is a welcome sight to see Supervisor Mecham finally wake up to the danger the overreaching AB2453 legislation poses to the basin. Where have you been Frank? When you have both the Cattlemen's Association and the Sierra Club agreeing that something is bad, it has got to be extraordinarily bad.

Mr. Mecham is finally on the record that the basin is not this big amorphous pool of water, but a series of sub-basins and strata. A one size fits all water district makes no sense. But the proponents of AB2453 are all about control not solutions

The "one property one vote" at least gives all the residents of the basin a voice in the formation process. But formation is not the same thing as control.

He doesn't seem to understand that there is a potential Trojan Horse in the process, especially if the BOS appoints the first directors. It is a stretch of credulity that this amendment just popped up out of thin air in a suggestion by a senate staffer. He stated he is OK with this, but we don't believe he fully understands the danger here.
This innocuous "suggestion" exploits a flaw in the LAFCO procedure. LAFCO can and will form a district in the absence of a management plan (what do you expect; it is after all a government run agency). The board of the newly

formed district is empowered to create the management plan as its first order of business (OK, maybe second, they already seem to have their compensation and administration costs calculated). In a case such as the formation of a CSD, this may not be a problem – the objectives of that type of organization are limited and specific. A good example is the formation a community water system.

But this is not the case in a district of the size and complexity that would be needed to manage the entire the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin. Without clear preconditions and limitations on the scope and extent of their powers, the management board of the district could enact a management plan with extremely broad power over the basin and members of the district.

One example is creating a replenishment district. Heard that term used lately? Now who would be against the creation of a replenishment district? Isn't that a good "solution?" Not necessarily as we found out in the recent decision CENTRAL AND WEST BASIN WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT v. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WATER COMPANY. Here is the synopsis:

"This appeal presents two principal issues: who has the right to utilize unused storage space in the Central Basin, a groundwater basin, and who has the right to manage the subsurface storage space. These issues arise in the context of a motion that sought to allocate all of the usable storage space to the 148 public entities and private persons with the adjudicated right to extract water from the basin. The trial court denied the motion. It concluded that the unused storage space is a public resource, and that the Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD) is authorized to manage it. We affirm."
It is worth the time to read through this court case. It affects us directly. The Paso Robles Groundwater Basin has huge vertical storage capability.

Under Water Code §60000 et seq "Water Replenishment Districts are employed to Replenish the water and protect and preserve the groundwater supplies." Sounds simple

Publius Valerius

doesn't it? Well, not necessarily as we will soon see.
The district used conjunctive use projects for water management. From the same court case: "In lieu and artificial recharge are two types of conjunctive use projects. In lieu projects involve using surface water in lieu of pumping water from a basin. (Association of Groundwater Agencies, A Guide To Conjunctive Use in Southern California (2000) pp. 6-7.) Artificial recharge requires forcing surface water into available storage space in an underground basin through percolation ponds or injection wells."

If you have following the news, there are already pilot projects of both conjunctive use methods in the works here in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.

Of course, the members of the district were paying for all this. The overlying owners had "allocations" set by the district which would balance the water yield of the basin. They sought to increase their allocations with some of the water in the unused "storage space" they paid for and was being managed by the district. The management district said no, we manage the storage space and it's ours. The members sued the district.

What the court held was that the "storage space" did not belong to the overlying property owners, the members who paid for the operation of the district. It was a "public resource" managed by the replenishment district! To paraphrase a line from Chinatown, they may think they knew, but they had no idea what was going on there. This court case summed it perfectly "Appellants *(ed. the members)* cite no cases where courts have relied only on "common sense" or practicalities to award water or property rights." Well, at least the court was honest. The district management stole the water fair and square.

Here is where the danger of appointment power comes into play. LAFCO will approve the district formation and the BOS will appoint the first set of directors. The scope and activities of the district will be determined by the first set of directors. You may think you know what you are voting for, but until that management plan is in place you have no idea what you are really going to get.

Oh, by the way, their terms are conveniently staggered so you cannot even remove the board in the first election if you don't like what they are doing.

The second danger this illustrates is once you have a district like this in place, you are at the mercy of an unelected board of directors. You think you control your groundwater? No you don't. Once the district is in place, the district management does and they don't have to listen to the members. If you want change, you have to sue. Even then you are not guaranteed success. Your water rights are effectively extinguished.

So there you have it, embrace, extend, extinguish. Right now management by adjudication should be sounding a whole lot better even to the scoffers.

Supervisor Mecham appears to be moving in the direction of Supervisor Arnold who supports limited scope irrigation districts where needed and wanted. This is a good way to deal with spot problems in the basin. But one final word of advice to both Supervisors Mecham and Arnold, If they are seriously interested in protecting the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin, we need to see them step up and immediately co-sponsor a "Not one drop of water export from the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin" ordinance and make the passage of that ordinance a precondition to their support of any form of any water district in the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin.

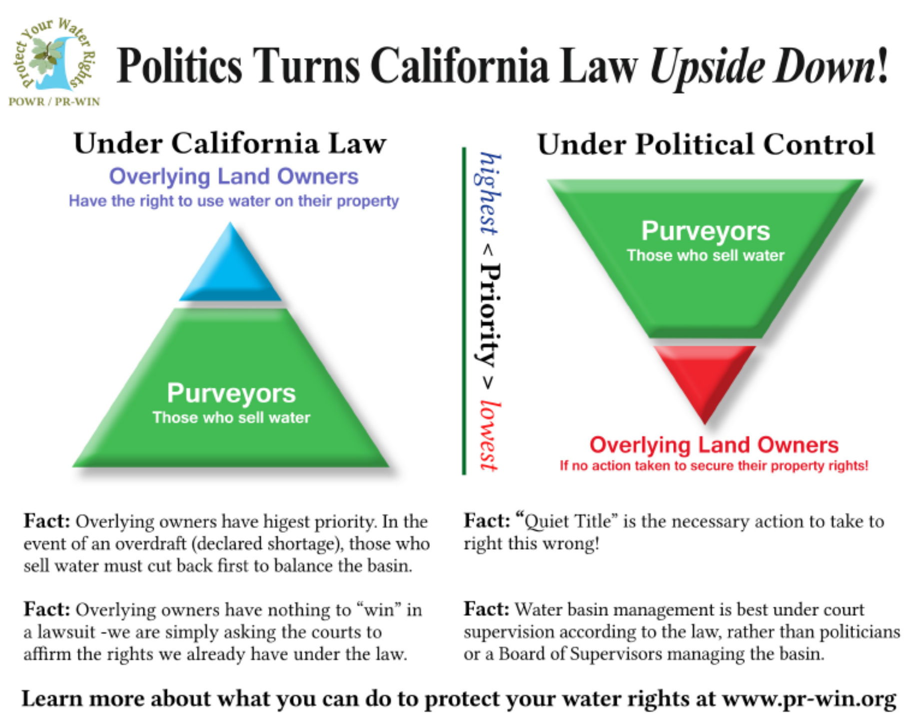
AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE TOPIC OF THE PASO WATER BASIN

(UPDATE FROM PROTECT OUR WATER RIGHTS)

Earlier this month Protect our Water Rights (POWR) , the group filing the quiet title water rights action, issued the statement below indicting the number of property owners joining the quiet title suit is expanding:
Protect Our Water Rights amended its complaint this week to add an additional 6,000 acres seeking Quiet Title The group is now comprised of over 200 unique landowners representing more than 12,000 acres above the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (PRGWB). Our group continues to grow as more and more concerned citizens realize the need to protect their water rights.

California groundwater law is specific. Property owners, small or large, have the right to use the water beneath their land for reasonable and beneficial use on their property. The law also states that in a time of shortage, those who sell water, known as "purveyors", must conserve or find alternative sources of water to supply their customers. The Urgency Ordinance passed by the SLO County Board of Supervisors in 2013 forced the law upside down, placing the entire burden on the overlying landowners above the PRGWB.

Seeking Quiet Title is not "litigation". It is simply asking the court to affirm the existing water rights that accompany land ownership. The "Adjudication" of the PRGWB was triggered when local purveyors challenged our request to the Court. The Quiet Title case will be before the court in San Jose for a case management conference on July 11th. Additional information can be found at www.protectyourwaterrights.com.



CALIFORNIA VS. TEXAS IN ONE CHART

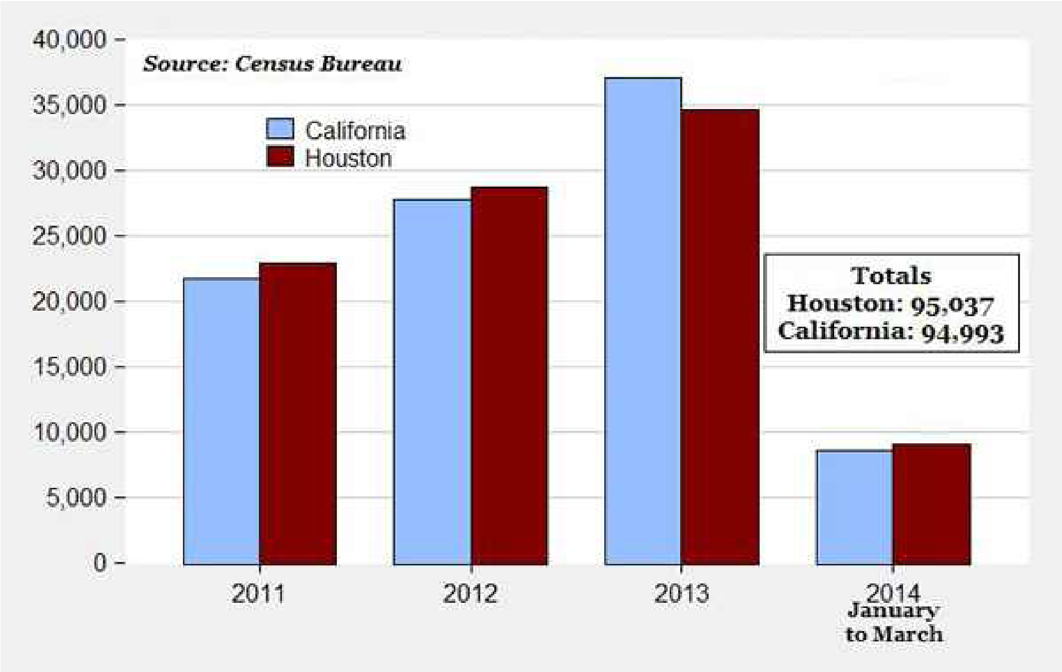
by Mark J. Perry on May 20, 2014

As can be seen on the following chart, during the period from January 2011 to March 2014, there have been slightly more single-family housing starts in Houston (95,037) than in California for the entire state (94,993). In this single chart, we can understand the dynamism of the booming, expanding Texas economy and housing market compared to the stagnation of the California economy and the housing market there for new construction. The chart displays 1-unit housing starts for the entire state of California and the Houston metro area annually from 2011-2013 and year-to-date through March for 2014.

In a recent column ("The High Cost of Liberalism"), economist Thomas Sowell offered some insights into the housing market in California that would help explain why fewer homes are being built in the entire Golden State than in one major city in Texas:

"Liberals advocate many wonderful things. In fact, I suspect that most conservatives would prefer to live in the kind of world envisioned by liberals, rather than in the kind of world envisioned by conservatives. Unfortunately, the only kind of world that any of us can live in is the world that actually exists. Trying to live in the kind of world that liberals envision has costs that will not go away just because these costs are often ignored by liberals.

One of those costs appeared in an announcement of a house for sale in Palo Alto, the community adjacent to Stanford University.



Left: Housing Starts Authorized by Building Permits 1 Unit Structures, California vs. Houston, 2011-2014

Houston SMSA 6.63 Million population; 10,062 Sq. Miles. California 38.3 population; 163,696 Sq. Miles. Houston Median Home price- $ 189,000, California - $ 376,000; SLO County $ 360,000.

The house is for sale at $1,498,000. It is a 1,010 square foot bungalow with two bedrooms, one bath and a garage. This house is not an aberration, and its price is not out of line with other housing prices in Palo Alto. Even a vacant lot in Palo Alto costs more than a spacious middle-class home costs in most of the rest of the country. How does this tie in with liberalism?

In this part of California, liberalism reigns supreme and "open space" is virtually a religion. What that lovely phrase means is that there are vast amounts of empty land where the law forbids anybody from building anything. Anyone who has taken Economics 1 knows that preventing the supply from rising to meet the demand means that prices are going to rise. Housing is no exception.

There are people who claim that astronomical housing prices in places like Palo Alto and San Francisco are due to a scarcity of land. But there is enough vacant land ("open space") on the other side of the 280 Freeway that goes past Palo Alto to build another Palo Alto or two — except for laws and policies that make that impossible.

As in San Francisco and other parts of the country where housing prices skyrocketed after building homes was prohibited or severely restricted, this began in Palo Alto in the 1970s. Housing prices in Palo Alto nearly quadrupled during that decade. This was not due to expensive new houses being built, because not a single new house was built in Palo Alto in the 1970s. The same old houses simply shot up in price. That is part of the unacknowledged cost of "open space," and just part of the high cost of liberalism."

The religion of "open space" in California probably helps explain why there's more new construction of single-family homes in Houston than in the entire state of California. And those "open space"-driven housing restrictions in California help explain the high cost of housing there relative to Houston. During the month of March, the median sales price of homes sold in California at $376,000 was almost exactly double the median sales price of homes sold in Houston at $189,000. The median sales price in the SF Bay area in March was $579,000, more than three times the median sales price in Houston. And those huge differences in housing prices probably help explain why firms like Toyota and Occidental Petroleum are moving from California to Texas, joining other firms including Industrial Brush, General Motors, DHF Technical Products and Sony Pictures that have relocated operations this year to Utah, Michigan, New Mexico and British Columbia respectively. Expect more out-migration of people, jobs, businesses and one-way U-Haul trucks from California in the future….

Dr. Mark J. Perry is a full professor of economics at the Flint campus of The University of Michigan, where he has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in economics and finance since 1996. Starting in the fall of 2009, Perry has also held a joint appointment as a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. This post originally appeared on the website of the American Enterprise Institute and is republished here with permission from the author.

Median Home Price by City

City	Price
Arroyo Grande	$ 460,595
Atascadero	$ 308,487
Grover Beach	$ 335,810
Morro Bay	$ 349,500
Paso Robles	$ 284,184
Pismo Beach	$ 520,000
San Luis Obispo	$ 532,819

COLAB Note: San Luis Obispo County prices are more like Palo Alto. It is strange that the County , in its own document, does not list the median price for the unincorporated area(and sub areas). After all they have the Assessor's data base and a very sophisticated geographic information system which we all paid for. Perhaps the Board members do not want you to know the ugly numbers from the unincorporated area where their land use policies are a fundamental cost determinant. The City of San Luis Obispo, as we have noted elsewhere , is furthest along in implementing the "smart growth" strategy. Nothing like raising the kids in a $500 K 3rd floor 1400 sq. ft. condo on Broad St. with a view of the parking lot and Arby's.

Source: 2014-15 Proposed San Luis Obispo County Budget

"SMART GROWTH" IS ANTI FAMILY AND ANTI CHILD

Check out the article below which shows how absolutely prejudicial the County's land use policies are to children .Will stack and pack villages in SLO County simply be small scale copies of historical big city mistakes? Is the County's overall architecture of land use planning simply a giant scheme to gentrify Templeton, San Miguel, Oceano, and Nipomo?

THE CHILDLESS CITY

IT'S HIP, IT'S ENTERTAINING – BUT WHERE ARE THE FAMILES?

By Joel Kotkin and Ali Modarres
August 6, 2013
From the City Journal

What is a city for? Ever since cities first emerged thousands of years ago, they have been places where families could congregate and flourish. The family hearth formed the core of the ancient Greek and Roman city, observed the nineteenth-century French historian Fustel de Coulanges. Family was likewise the foundation of the great ancient cities of China and the Middle East. As for modern European cities, the historian Philippe Ariès argued that the contemporary "concept of the family" itself originated in the urbanizing northern Europe shown in Rembrandt's paintings of bourgeois life. Another historian, Simon Schama, described the seventeenth-century Dutch city as "the Republic of Children." European immigrants carried the institution of the family-oriented city across the Atlantic to America. In the American city until the 1950s, urbanist Sam Bass Warner observed, the "basic custom" was "commitment to familialism." But more recently, we have embarked on an experiment to rid our cities of children. In the 1960s, sociologist Herbert Gans identified a growing chasm between family-oriented suburbanites and people who favored city life—"the rich, the poor, the non-white as well as the unmarried and childless middle class." Families abandoned cities for the suburbs, driven away by policies that failed to keep streets safe, allowed decent schools to decline, and made living spaces unaffordable. Even the partial rebirth of American cities since then hasn't been enough to lure families back. The much-ballyhooed and self-celebrating "creative class"—a demographic group that includes not only single professionals but also well-heeled childless couples, empty nesters, and college students—occupies much of the urban space once filled by families. Increasingly, our great American cities, from New York and Chicago to Los Angeles and Seattle, are evolving into playgrounds for the rich, traps for the poor, and way stations for the ambitious young en route eventually to less congested places. The middle-class family has been pushed to the margins, breaking dramatically with urban history. The development raises at least two important questions: Are cities without children sustainable? And are they desirable?

Best-selling urban booster Richard Florida, a pied piper for today's city developers and planners, barely mentions families in his books, which focus instead on younger, primarily single populations. Eric Klinenberg, a New York University professor and author of the widely touted Going Solo, celebrates the fact that "cities create the conditions that make living alone a more social experience." But perhaps the most cogent formulation of the post-family city comes from the sociologists Richard Lloyd and Terry Nichols Clark, who see the city, and particularly the urban core, as an "entertainment machine." In their view, city residents "can experience their own urban location as if tourists, emphasizing aesthetic concerns." Schools, churches, and neighborhood associations no longer form the city's foundation. Instead, the city revolves around recreation, arts, culture, and restaurants—a system built for the newly liberated individual.

Demographic trends seem to bear out this vision. Over the past two decades, the percentage of families that have children has fallen in most of the country, but nowhere more dramatically than in our largest, densest urban areas. In cities with populations greater than 500,000, the population of children aged 14 and younger actually declined between 2000 and 2010, according to U.S. Census data, with New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Detroit experiencing the largest numerical drop. Many urban school districts—such as Chicago, which has 145,000 fewer school-age children than it had a decade ago—have seen enrollments plummet and are busily closing schools. The 14-and-younger population increased in only about one-third of all census-designated places, with the greatest rate of growth occurring in smaller urban areas with fewer than 250,000 residents.

Consider, too, the generation of Americans between the ages of 25 and 34 in 2000. By 2010, the core cities of the country's 51 most populous metropolitan areas had lost, on average, 15 percent of that cohort, many of whom surely married and started having children during that period. While it's not possible to determine where they went, note that suburbs saw an average 14 percent gain in that population during the same period.

Of course, not all sections of our largest cities are equally bereft of children. Of Los Angeles County census tracts where less than 10 percent of the population was 14 and younger in 2010, a significant number were located downtown and along the coast. These are mostly high-density areas where housing is expensive. You'll find a considerably higher proportion of children under 14 in low-income parts of South and East Los Angeles, and also in middle-class neighborhoods in the heart of the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valleys.

Opinion polls confirm the impulse behind the child exodus. For example, in a recent survey for the Manhattan Institute by Zogby Analytics, 58 percent of people with children under 17 said that they would consider leaving New York City for better opportunities elsewhere; only 38 percent of those without children agreed. Part of the reason is surely the city's density and cost, which make family life difficult. In Manhattan, where the average rent approaches $4,000 a month, it's no surprise that families are waning.

A more family-friendly city remains possible. The Brooklyn community of Flatbush—like Staten Island, Queens, and eastern portions of Brooklyn—was built in the first half of the twentieth century to appeal to families fleeing the congestion of New York's core. Just as the suburbs do now, these new settlements revolted many urbanists, such as Lewis Mumford, who complained in 1921 that the "dissolute landscape" was "a no-man's land which was neither town nor country." But Flatbush's tree-lined neighborhoods, such as Kensington and Ditmas Park, may be the city's best hope for retaining middle-class families. These areas still have many single-family homes and low-rise apartments. And Cortelyou Road, a main drag in Ditmas Park, brims with fami-

ly-friendly restaurants and shops, though it was fairly desolate just a decade ago. Young families are enthusiastic about the neighborhood. "It's an amazing place," says Kari Browne, co-owner of the Lark café on nearby Church Avenue. "But the key concern is: Can you afford to stay?"
For many young families living in New York's outer boroughs, the availability of space, particularly backyards, is deeply important. "The cost of space is the biggest issue in Brooklyn," says resident Michael Milch, whose wife attends dental school at NYU. "The issue becomes: Can you get some personal green space?" Obviously, people who settle here are willing to make do with less space than those who, say, move to a far-flung exurb in Putnam County. But all are seeking space in communities more amenable to family life than are the contemporary city cores. Heightened family demand may be helping send housing prices steadily upward in New York's boroughs, as young couples move from Manhattan to less dense neighborhoods. Jason Walker, a 45-year-old father of two, left Washington, D.C. (which may have the highest percentage of childless households in the nation), for Ditmas Park to escape "a culture dominated by childless people leery of the existence of kids." The Walkers live in a two-bedroom apartment but are looking for a house in the area.

Such opportunities exist elsewhere in America, too, in places where detached single-family homes—the preferred housing of 80 percent of American adults, according to a National Association of Realtors survey in 2011—are often just a short walk or ride from the urban core. With its broad streets and massive shopping centers, the California city of Irvine may lack the inner-ring charms of Flatbush. But families are drawn to Irvine's amenities—especially its schools. "You really have to worry about the schools in New York," says Walker, whose children are six and eight. "If you have to go to private schools, this makes it a struggle to stay here." In Irvine, by contrast, "everything stems from education," says resident Eveleen Liu. "The city draws people who are impassioned about their kids and their school. Everyone volunteers. It's the glue that holds this place together." Schools are particularly crucial in attracting Asians, now the country's fastest-growing immigrant group. Safety is another big draw: Irvine consistently rates among the safest American cities with more than 100,000 residents.

Families are also deeply attracted to open space. The great Frederick Law Olmsted–designed New York parks, including Prospect Park in Flatbush, are enormous assets for families without backyards. Irvine may lack stunning urban architecture and glorious cathedrals, but it has a magnificent park system that gives residents ideal settings for recreation, exercise, and family gatherings. "It's an environment that is clean and nice and open to everyone," says Veronika Kim, a mother of three and an apartment tenant in Woodbury, an Irvine neighborhood. "You can walk there with the kids and let them play. Even if you rent, you don't feel like an outsider." The parks are good not only for kids but for adults—for example, the members of the Woodbury Woodies, who play softball every week against teams from other neighborhoods. "There's a deep sense of community here," says Woody regular Julian Forniss. "Softball is part of that." On the site of a former Marine Corps base, Irvine and Orange County are developing a "Great Park" that will be twice the size of New York's 840-acre Central Park.

Other family-friendly cities have embarked on ambitious park and open-space projects as well. In Raleigh, North Carolina, the nearly completed $30 million Neuse River Greenway Trail cuts through 28 miles of forest. Houston's $480 million Bayou Greenways project will eventually add some 4,000 acres of green space across the city, from the downtown to the outer suburbs, including 300 miles of continuous hiking and bike trails. Houston's rival, Dallas, is planning a vast 6,000-acre park.

What families need is more affordable urban neighborhoods with decent schools, safe streets, adequate parks—and more housing space. As New York University's Shlomo Angel points out, virtually all major cities worldwide are growing outward more than inward—and becoming less dense in the process—because density drives families away from urban cores and toward less dense peripheries. The lesson is clear: if cities want families, they should promote a mixture of density options.

The solution is not to wage war on suburbia, as urbanists have been doing for years. Following the notions that Jane Jacobs advanced a half-century ago, contemporary urbanists argue that high density creates a stronger sense of community. (Jacobs once opined that raising children in the suburbs had to be difficult, somehow overlooking how families were flocking to those suburbs.) But that contention isn't self-evident. The University of California's Jan Breuckner and Ann Largey conducted 15,000 interviews across the country and found that for every 10 percent drop in population density, the likelihood of someone's talking to his neighbor once a week went up 10 percent, regardless of race, income, education, marital status, or age.

In California, particularly, state and local officials push policies that favor the development of apartments over single-family houses and town houses. But by trying to cram people into higher-density space, planners inadvertently help push up prices for the existing stock of family-friendly homes. Such policies have already been practiced for decades in the United Kingdom, making even provincial cities increasingly unaffordable, as British social commentator James Heartfield notes. London itself is among the least affordable cities in the world. Even middle-class residents have been known to live in garages, converted bathrooms, and garden sheds.

A city that continues to be high-density and high-cost hasn't necessarily signed its own death warrant. Manhattan, parts of Brooklyn, and much of San Francisco, Seattle, Boston, and other amenity-rich cities—what Tulane University geographer Richard Campanella calls "kiddie deserts"—continue to flourish. But other cities, such as Detroit, Cleveland, and Buffalo, can't attract the same interest from young hipsters and the rich and are consequently less capable of withstanding the effects of family flight to the suburbs. Even in the most affluent cities, the dearth of families reinforces public policies incompatible with children, argues the Austrian demographer Wolfgang Lutz. For example, fewer middle-class families means less political pressure to reform education or support for tougher law enforcement.

Ultimately, everything boils down to what purpose a city should serve. History has shown that rapid declines in childbearing—whether in ancient Rome, seventeenth-century Venice, or modern-day Tokyo—correlate with an erosion of cultural and economic vitality. The post-family city appeals only to a certain segment of the population, one that, however affluent, cannot ensure a prosperous future on its own. If cities want to nurture the next generation of urbanites and keep more of their younger adults, they will have to find a way to welcome back families, which have sustained cities for millennia and given the urban experience much of its humanity.

Mr. Kotkin is a City Journal contributing editor and the Distinguished Presidential Fellow in Urban Futures at Chapman University. Mr. Modarres is a professor of urban geography at California State University, Los Angeles.

Proud of Sprawl in the San Fernando Valley

COUNTY'S OWN NUMBERS SUBSTANTIATE POLICY DISCONNECT

By Michael F Brown

It is both ironic and regrettable that given all the Supervisorial self-congratulation over the two large solar farms located within the County, they are not listed among the County's top property tax payers or largest employers. As government subsidized experiments, their generating plants, worth billions, are property tax-exempt. The County and school district will forego $30 million per year in property taxes each year for the life of the plants, which is currently estimated at 30 to 40 years. Over 35 years this is $1.050 billion. In return, ratepayers receive higher electric bills to cover the higher per-kilowatt-hour cost of solar generated electricity.

In terms of jobs, the County estimated that in the operating mode, each plant would employ only about 20 permanent workers, less than the County's Long Range Planning Division, which is currently budgeted at 29.

Most of the County's largest employers are also property tax-exempt because they are government agencies. In fact, and except for the Diablo Nuclear Power Plant, a privately owned hospital, a bank, and a software manufacturer, all the County's other major employers are governments, branches of government agencies, government supported non-profits, or government operated schools.

County of San Luis Obispo
Principal Property Taxpayers
Current Year and Ten Years Ago
(in Thousands)
(UNAUDITED)

		Fiscal Year 2013			Fiscal Year 2004		
Taxpayer	Industry	Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed Value	Assessed Value	Rank	Percentage of Total County Assessed Value
Pacific Gas & Electric Co.	Utility	2,641,186	1	6.32%	2,163,485	1	7.90%
TOSCO Corp	Petroleum & Gas	144,966	2	0.35%	176,951	2	0.65%
Beringer Wine Estates Company	Winery	89,873	3	0.22%	58,283	5	0.21%
Plains Exploation & Production	Petroleum & Gas	81,401	4	0.19%	-		-
CSHV Mustang Village LLC	Apartments	76,800	5	0.18%	-		-
Pacific Bell Telephone Co	Telephone	71,897	6	0.17%	-		-
Southern California Gas Co	Utility	63,866	7	0.15%	48,942	6	0.18%
Martin Hotel Mgmt Co LLC	Hotel	62,521	8	0.15%	-		-
Pasquini Charles Jr Tre Etal	Private	55,665	9	0.13%	-		-
Sierra Vista Hospital Inc	Hospital	55,004	10	0.13%	45,450	7	0.17%
Duke Energy Morro Bay, LLC	Utility	-	-	-	110,431	3	0.40%
SBC California	Utility	-	-	-	92,297	4	0.34%
Charter Communications	Communications	-	-	-	42,564	8	0.16%
ESJ Centers LLC ETAL	Real Estate	-	-	-	37,070	9	0.14%
Vons Companies	Grocery Store	-	-	-	32,432	10	0.12%
Total		$ 3,343,180		8.00%	$ 2,807,905		10.27%
	Total County Assessed Value	$ 41,796,284			$ 27,335,938		

Source: County Property Tax System

Source: San Luis Obispo Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, FY 2013.

Top 20 Employers in San Luis Obispo County

County of San Luis Obispo
California Polytechnic University
Atascadero State Hospital
California Men's Colony
Pacific Gas & Electric
Tenet Healthcare
Lucia Mar Unified School District
Paso Robles Public Schools
Cal Poly Corporation
San Luis Coastal Unified School District
Cuesta College
Atascadero Unified School District
Community Action Partnership of SLO
California Department of Transportation
California State Parks
SLO County Office of Education
Rabobank
Mind Body
City of San Luis Obispo
Community Health Centers

Of the top entities that are not tax exempt, one operates a nuclear power plant, two are oil companies, one is a natural gas utility, two are communications companies, one operates vineyards, and one operates hotels.

Of course any growth of the oil and gas industry in the County is viewed with suspicion and will soon be subject to vigorous attacks by organized groups which oppose enhanced extraction methods. It is rumored that Board Chair Gibson's next assault (now that he has installed "smart" no growth, more or less locked down the Paso Basin, and has PG&E staggering under new expensive requirements for relicensing) will be a broad attack on fossil fuel producers disguised as an anti-fracking crusade. The proposed Philip's 66 Rail Spur expansion (for parking tank cars) is also under attack.

One would think that the employees and pensioners of the local governments (County, cities, special districts), the local schools (including Cuesta), and the government funded not-for-profits would be up in arms about fragility of their financial future given the current landscape and overall decremental land use polices of the State, County, APCD, and some of the cities.

The fact is that the taxes and fees, which pay public employee salaries and benefits, do not fall from heaven. They are ultimately generated by private sector businesses that make and sell products and services outside of the County (or to customers from outside the county in the case of the hospitality industry) thereby generating inflows of revenues to the local economy. These companies are known as economic export base industries, meaning that they bring in revenue from outside of the local economy. It is estimated that the typical export base company generates about 3-5 jobs within the local economy for every job which they themselves create. These revenues are then used to pay local employees and buy from local suppliers, which in turn support local businesses such as homebuilders, retailers, and service providers.

When a cattle ranch sells beef to a regional or national supermarket chain, it is bringing in revenue from outside the local economy. When a SLO based software developer sells systems and service to firms nationally, the same thing is happening. Similarly, when a Paso Basin vineyard sells 1000 cases of wine to a supermarket chain or national wine wholesaler, it is bringing in revenue. Likewise, when PG&E sells 2500 MGD of electricity across the state and some revenue comes back to the local economy in the form of payroll, purchases, and local taxes paid.

The Board of Supervisors and County staff need to understand how local economies work and develop and integrated strategy for jobs, homes, economic development, capital planning, and financing. The current ideological balkanized regulatory strategy should be thrown out, and a strategy that benefits current and future generations adopted. Or will the current Board majority continue to cater to its support base of anti-oil, anti-mining, anti-single-family detached home, anti-nuclear, anti-car, and anti-private property radicals? Will it continue to attack its best private sector employers and taxpayers?

Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business
San Luis Obispo County
"Your Property – Your Taxes – Our Future"
PO Box 13601 – San Luis Obispo, CA 93406 / Phone: 805.548-0340
Email: colabslo@gmail.com / Website: colabslo.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS:

General Member: $100 – $249 ❑ $ _______ **Voting Member: $250 - $5,000 ❑ $ _______**

Sustaining Member: $5,000 +❑ $ _______
(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)

General members will receive all COLAB updates and newsletters. Voting privileges are limited to Voting Members and Sustainable Members with one vote per membership.

MEMBER INFORMATION:

Name: ______________________________

Company: ______________________________

Address: ______________________________

City: ______________________ State: ____________ Zip: ____________

Phone: ____________ Fax: ____________ Email: ______________

How Did You Hear About COLAB?

Radio ❑ Internet ❑ Public Hearing ❑ Friend ❑

COLAB Member(s) /Sponsor(s): ______________________________

NON MEMBER DONATION/CONTRIBUTION OPTION:

For those who choose not to join as a member but would like to support COLAB via a contribution/donation.
I would like to contribute $ ____________ to COLAB and my check or credit card information is enclosed/provided.

Donations/Contributions do not require membership though it is encouraged in order to provide updates and information.
Memberships and donation will be kept confidential if that is your preference.
Confidential Donation/Contribution/Membership ❑

PAYMENT METHOD:

Check ❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover ❑ Amex NOT accepted.

Cardholder Name: ______________________ Signature: ______________________

Card Number: ______________ Expiration Date: __________ Billing Zip Code: ________

TODAY'S DATE: ______________________

All applications are subject to review and approval by the COLAB Membership Committee and Board of Directors.
Applications that are not accepted will have the dues or donations promptly refunded.

(Revised 1/2013)