COLAB San Luis Obispo County

The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

WEEKLY UPDATE JUNE 2 - 8, 2019

THIS WEEK

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LIGHT

SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO THE CANNABIS REGS

EMPLOYEES WILL PAY A LITTLE MORE FOR A PENSION COST INCREASE

SLOCOG TO ADOPT MASTER POLICIES ON HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, AND FUTURE SHAPE OF THE COUNTY FOR NEXT 25 YEARS

DOCUMENTS TEE UP "RATIONALE" FOR A SALES TAX PUSH IN 2020

&

A STACK-AND-PACK TRANSIT ORIENTED FUTURE

LAST WEEK

NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

OTHER AGENCIES DORMANT

SLO COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 19

GREEN PIGS TAKING AMERICA FOR A RIDE!

BY ANDY CALDWELL

GRAND BARGAINS TO MAKE CALIFORNIA AFFORDABLE

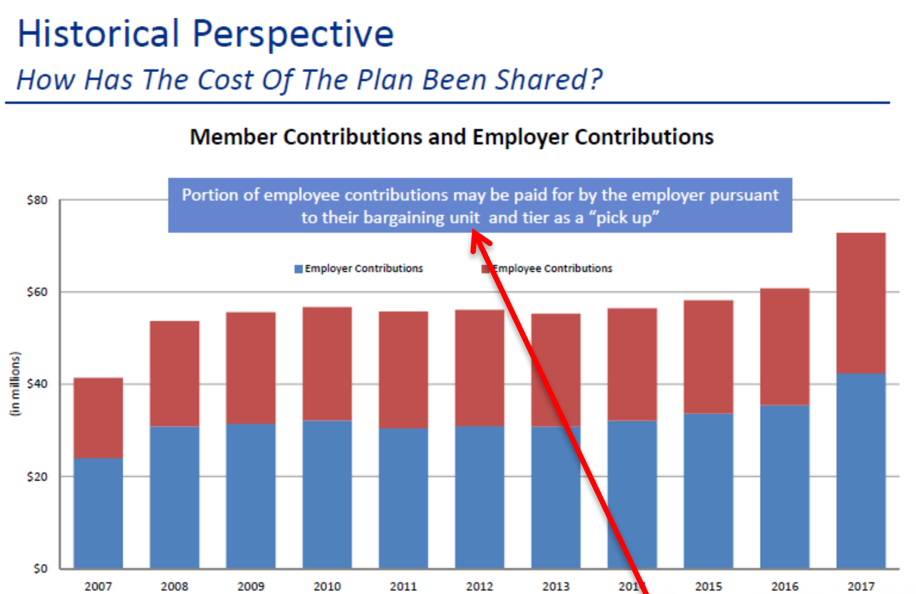
BY EDWARD RING

California's *political elites are at odds with history and the natural preferences of millions of Californians*

THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, June 4, 2019 (Scheduled)

Item 14 - Increases in Employee Pension Contribution Rates. The County is gradually attempting to negotiate labor contracts under which employees pay more toward their pensions. One of these provisions is for the employees and the County to share a portion of rate increases. Last year there was a 2.80 aggregate rate increase. The table below shows the current County and employee shares. Lest anyone think that salvation is in sight, remember that the County is paying the largest share overall on the unfunded accumulated actuarial liability of over $600,000,000.



Plus the county, as noted above, picks up a portion of the employee's share. We cannot find an absolute cost figure displayed in the budget for this but it must be substantial because the labor contract provisions provide for anywhere from 4.2 % to 13.5 % based on the provisions in each individual union contract and each employee's pension tier.

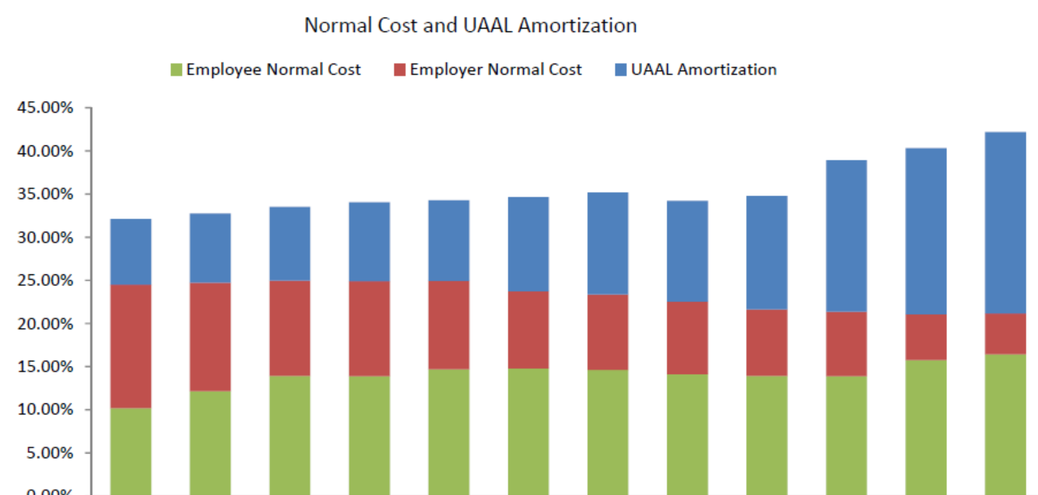
From County Budget page 85:

Additionally, the County pays a portion of the employee's retirement contribution (County pickup) for Tier 1 and 2:

Employee Group	2018-19	2019-20
Elected Officials	13.55 %	13.55 %
Attorneys	9.29	9.29
Management and Confidential	9.29	9.29
Public Services, Clerical and Supervisory	8.75	8.75
Trades, Crafts and Services	10.38	10.38
Probation Management	9.29	9.29
Probation Officers/Supervisors	5.75	5.75
Law Enforcement, Safety	7.00	7.00
Law Enforcement Non-Safety	4.20	4.20
District Attorney Investigators	7.20	7.20

It is not clear what the cost actually is, but it must be in the millions on top of what the County already pays.

Another view:



	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
UAAL Amortization	7.62%	8.02%	8.55%	9.13%	9.34%	10.92%	11.80%	11.71%	13.13%	17.55%	19.24%	21.04%
Employer Normal Cost	14.30%	12.57%	11.04%	11.01%	10.22%	8.92%	8.77%	8.40%	7.71%	7.47%	5.32%	4.74%
Employee Normal Cost	10.20%	12.15%	13.91%	13.89%	14.71%	14.79%	14.61%	14.12%	13.93%	13.88%	15.76%	16.41%

The table below on the next page displays the new changes. The variability is a function of different contract provisions, pension tier (when and under what laws the employees were hired), and other factors.

Employee Association	Bargaining Unit (BU) and Description	Full Pension Rate Increase	Employee Share of Increase	County Share of Increase
District Attorney Investigators Association (DAIA)	BU06 – District Attorney Investigators' Unit and District Attorney Investigators' Supervisory Unit	All Tiers: 6.03%	All Tiers: 1.44%	All Tiers: 4.59%
Deputy County Counsel Association (DCCA)	BU12 – Deputy County Counsel Attorneys	All Tiers: 2.26%	All Tiers: 1.13%	All Tiers: 1.13%
Deputy Sheriffs' Association (DSA)	BU03 – Law Enforcement Unit BU14 – Supervisory Law Enforcement Unit BU21 – Non-Safety Law Enforcement Unit BU22 – Dispatcher Unit	All Tiers: 2.26% (Misc.) 6.03% (Safety)	All Tiers: 0.96% (Misc.) 0.00% (Safety)	All Tiers: 1.30% (Misc.) 6.03% (Safety)
Sworn Deputy Sheriffs Association (SDSA)	BU27 – Sworn Law Enforcement Unit BU28 – Sworn Law Enforcement Supervisory Unit	All Tiers: 6.03%	All Tiers: 0.00%	All Tiers: 6.03%
San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association (SLOCEA) "Big Unit"	BU01 – Public Services Unit BU05 – Supervisory Unit BU13 – Clerical Unit	All Tiers: 2.26%	All Tiers: 1.13%	All Tiers: 1.13%
San Luis Obispo County Employees' Association (SLOCEA) "Trades Unit"	BU02 – Trades, Crafts, and Services Unit	All Tiers: 2.26%	All Tiers: 1.13%	All Tiers: 1.13%
San Luis Obispo County Probation Peace Officers' Association (SLOCPPOA)	BU31 – Probation Unit BU32 – Probation Supervisory Unit	All Tiers: 3.99%	All Tiers: 1.99%	All Tiers: 2.00%
San Luis Obispo County Sheriffs Managers' Association (SLOCSMA)	BU15 – Sheriff's Management	All Tiers: 6.03%	All Tiers: 1.44%	All Tiers: 4.59%
San Luis Obispo Prosecutors' Association (SLOPA)	BU04 – Deputy District Attorneys	All Tiers: 2.26%	Tiers 1 & 2: 1.13% Tier 3: 0.00%	Tiers 1 & 2: 1.13% Tier 3: 2.26%
Unrepresented	BU07 – Operations and Staff BU08 – General Management BU09 – Appointed Department Heads BU10 – Elected Department Heads BU11 – Confidential Employees BU16 – General Management Law Enforcement BU17 – Board of Supervisors	All Tiers: 2.26% (Misc.) 3.99% (Probation) 6.03% (Safety)	All Tiers: 1.13% (Misc.) 1.99% (Probation) 3.01% (Safety)	All Tiers: 1.13% (Misc.) 2.00% (Probation) 3.02% (Safety)

These pension rate increases shall be effective and implemented the pay period including July 1, 2019.

Item 23 - Hearing to consider, as applicable to cannabis activities, the adoption of amendments and resolutions 1) amending Land Use Ordinance, Title 22 of the County Code (LRP2018-00006), 2) amending Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance, Title 23 of the County Code (LRP2018-00007). This item contains recommendations from the staff and the Planning Commission to amend certain provisions of the Cannabis regulatory ordinances. Some of the changes bring the County ordinances into line with State law. Another allows growers to transport the marijuana to processors and manufacturers. There is a provision that will allow a grower to process marijuana on his/her property which is grown on another property.

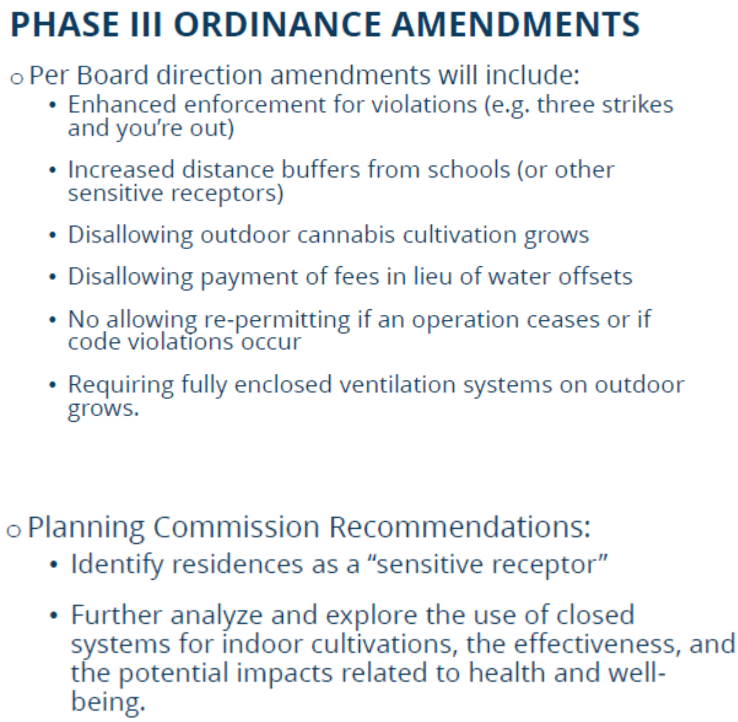
Surprisingly, there were very few commenters from the industry or the general public at the Planning Commission where these changes were approved. It is likely that the industry representatives are happy with them. From the standpoint of the general public, some of which is concerned with odors, these changes have little impact other then they make it easier for the industry to operate on a technical basis. There is some indicia that segments of the public are having buyer's remorse over approving legalization of recreational marijuana in the first place (county voters approved it) and allowing the County Board to approve its establishment in SLO County under the State' permissive statute. The problem now is that the Board cannot substantially pull it back because the industry has made heavy investments in land, improvements, plants, water, and permitting costs. The County cannot simply change its collective mind without beckoning property-taking claims.

The table below summarizes the changes:

SUMMARY TABLE – PHASE II ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

		Attachment 1: Page No.	Attachment 2: Page No.
DEFINITIONS	Add "Cannabis Cultivation Area" as a means to distinguish Cannabis Canopy from additional worker access and canopy spacing.	Page 1 of 34	Page 1 of 42
	Clarify and modify definitions for "Cannabis Hoop Structures", "Cannabis Nursery Canopy", "Cannabis Processing"	Pages 1 thru 2 of 34	Pages 2 thru 3 of 42
	Add "Cannabis Manufacturing" to support proposed expansion of manufacturing on Agriculture land	Page 2 of 34	Page 2 of 42
	Add "Extraction" and "Infusion" to support proposed expansion of manufacturing on Agriculture land	Page 2 of 34	Pages 3 of 42
CANNABIS CULTIVATION	Add clarifying language to Indoor and Outdoor cultivation limitations to define designated and approved cannabis cultivation area.	Page 9 of 34	Page 11 of 42
	Modify "Cannabis transport" standards (ancillary use) for clarification purposes and to mirror State law	Page 10 of 34	Page 12 of 42
	Modify "Screening and Fencing" standards and include additional language to modify standards	Pages 13 thru 14 and Page 16 of 34	Page 16 thru 17 and Page 19 of 42
CANNABIS NURSERIES	Add "Cannabis transport" as an ancillary activity consistent with cultivation	Page 16 of 34	Page 19 of 42
	Modify "Screening and Fencing" standards and include additional language to modify standards	Pages 18 thru 19 and Page 21 of 34	Pages 21 thru 22 and Page 24 of 42
CANNABIS MANUFACTURING	Amend 22.40.070 to allow expanded manufacturing activities within the Agriculture land use category	Pages 23 thru 26 of 34	Pages 28 thru 30 of 42
CANNABIS TRANSPORT FACILITIES	Add cannabis nursery and manufacturing to limitations on use	Page 32 of 34	Pages 36 of 42
COMMUNITY STANDARDS	Amendments to planning area and community standards (regulations specific to certain geographical areas)	N/A	Pages 40 of 42

More Changes to Come: Another round of changes is in the works and will be processed through the Planning Commission and eventually the Board. These include some of the ideas listed below on the County PowerPoint slides:



For the first time there are letters in the file from citizens seeking stronger regulations, including the banning of outdoor grows. Some Nipomo and Creston residents are represented in the Correspondence.

The full text of the ordinances can be accessed at the link below. The changes are easy to spot as they are highlighted in red.

http://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/10223

San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Meeting of Wednesday, June 5, 2019 (Scheduled)

The Meeting in General: The SLOCOG Board is set to approve 2 major components of long range policy (. the Regional Transportation Plan -**RTP** and 2. the regional Housing Needs Assessment - **RHNA**) which integrate transportation, housing, land use, and greenhouse gas reduction. Both plans have strong influence on the future of the unincorporated county and the cities. They will have profound influence (along with other state mandates that are in the works relative to forcing people onto mass transit and denser housing) in the future as they interact with these plans. SLOGOG often asserts that the 2 plans do not intrude on local land use decisions, which they insist remain under the jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors and the 7 city councils. This promise is akin to the oral surgeon or gastroenterologist who says you won't feel a thing during the procedure. It's only later after the anesthetic wears off, when you are taking Hydrocodone for days on end, that the consequences are real.

Some of the operative dynamics in play here include:

1. Local Officials Essentially Trapped: The local elected officials (a council member or mayor from each of the cities and all 5 County supervisors) on the SLOCOG Board, especially those who may have policy reservations, are trapped by the inherent carrots, sticks, and political expediency endemic to the of the system. For example:

a. Serving on the SLOCOG Board is not the main duty of its members. In fact the city representatives are appointments of their city councils. All are very busy with the key issues in their jurisdictions and have limited time to study the issues. It would be analogous to their also having responsibility for running a school district or other complex entity as well. They usually only meet monthly and sometimes skip a month. There is an executive committee made up of 3 members, which sets the agenda and tends to other administrative matters. Accordingly, the staff has tremendous influence over policy setting, interpreting the rules, and defining the goals.

Moreover the Board meetings take place on Wednesday mornings when the public is at work. Most of the public, except for interest groups, are oblivious to the major decisions that are made from time to time. The general media gives the SLOCOG little to no analytical coverage on the substance.

b. The cities and the County have a desperate need for money to maintain roads in the face of out of control operating expenses for pensions, salary increases, and added staff to cover absenteeism, and programmatic expansion in general engendered by the ongoing decay of society.

c. They also need funding to cover required and incentive matches on State grant funds.

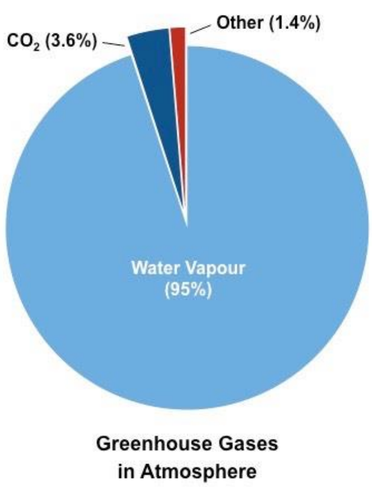
d. The public, business groups, and not-for-profits receive the overwhelming public brainwashing relative to the alleged "perils" of anthropomorphic generated CO_2 and now the New Green Deal as its latest manifestation. In reality this is a massive public relations campaign undertaken by the staff to process the public to end up agreeing with the result which they desire. Various Delphi committees are exposed to videos, statistical reports, legal interpretations, and consensual decision-making techniques.

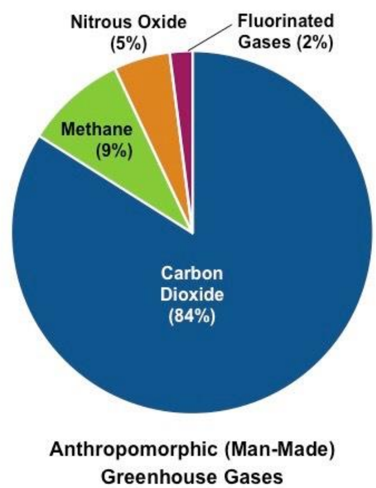
f. There is pressure from road builders, materials suppliers, and construction unions, which benefit from more projects.

g. Meanwhile everyone is constantly reminded that if people in the County don't do what the State wants, they will be penalized.

2. Politicians Afraid to Question the CO_2 Theory: At this point officials are unwilling to critically examine the whole underlying theory of anthropomorphic greenhouse gas generation, which is the fundamental premise driving the overall State imposed enviro requirements which are then baked into the local plans. What if CO_2 is not the villain? What if it's water vapor?

a. The primary greenhouse gas is water vapor (95%). CO_2 is only about 3.6%. Downplaying or disregarding water vapor or assigning too large a magnitude to feedbacks such as water vapor feedback that is thought to amplify direct warming of CO_2 serves to overemphasize Man's contribution to greenhouse warming.





How could CO_2 by itself have such a profound effect as is claimed by the global warmists? They only show you the chart on the right. The big picture is on the left.
No one would advocate "banning water vapor."

b. CO_2 levels have been much higher over the history of the planet. So have temperatures. But CO_2 is at the lowest levels in 146 million years, even with the recent alleged uptick. Note that epochs of high CO_2 concentration do not always correspond to epochs of high temperatures.

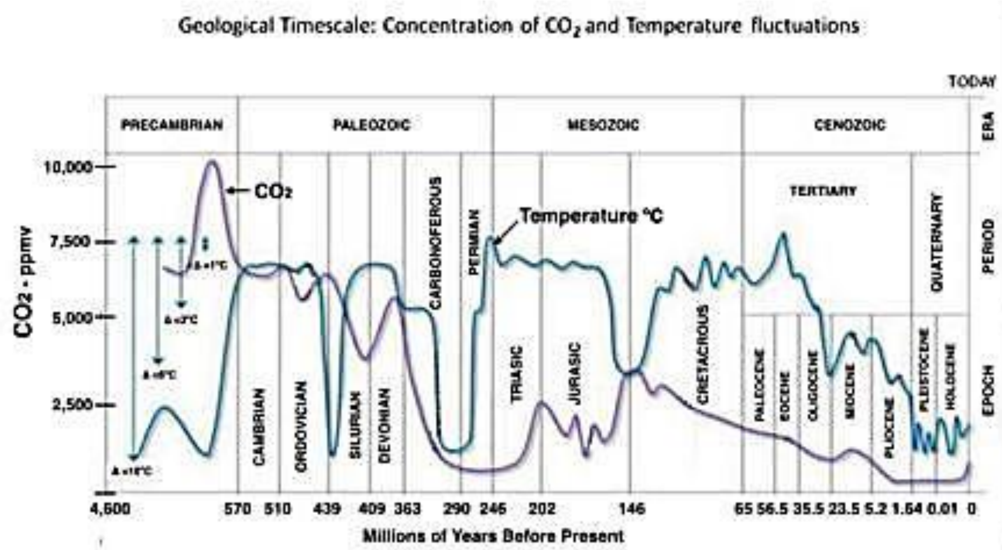
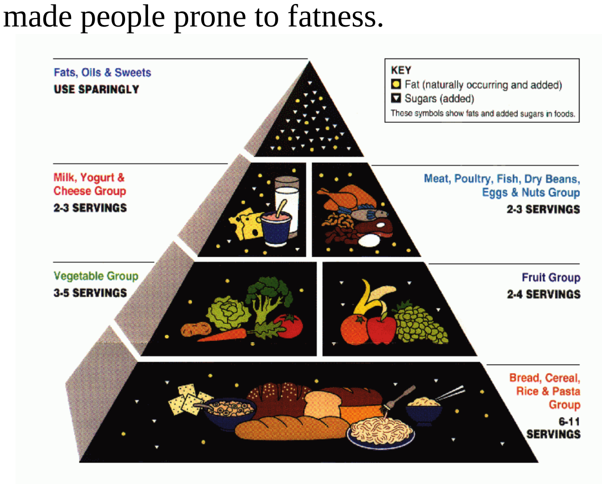


Figure 1. Graph of global temperature and atmospheric CO_2 concentration over the past 600 million years. Note both temperature and CO_2 are lower today than they have been during most of the era of modern life on Earth since the Cambrian Period. Also, note that this does not indicate a lock-step cause-effect relationship between the two parameters.[5]

The purple line is the CO_2 level. The blue line is the temperature level. Before the 19th and 20th centuries there was no human generated CO_2, other than from breathing. Wouldn't public policy makers be willing to listen to a different theory before committing their city, county, state, nation, and world to the CO_2 driven anthropomorphic warming theory? After all, settled "science" in the last century believed in Eugenics, that man could not break the sound barrier, Piltdown Man was a transition from apes to humans, and the USDA's diktat that children should be fed on the basis of the 6 food groups. The latter just made people prone to fatness.



It's too bad that SLOCOG and other entities are unwilling to schedule full on presentations to discuss the status of the CO_2 driven global warming theory and receive expert presentations on both sides. To just go along like lemmings into the sea could be one of the largest mistakes in human history. The very fact that something is presented as "settled science" which imposes massive government mandates on how society should be structured should arouse immediate suspicion.

3. Bottom Line: The challenge for SLOCOG was to develop a plan on both the RTP and RHNA sides, which meet State and local goals for the production of housing. It also had to consider population demographics, jobs, the ability to provide and finance local services, the ability to preserve agriculture, and many other variables. At the same time it had to figure out how to meet all these goals while reducing CO_2 by 11% relative to the 2005 level by 2035. This is a tall order given population growth, the potential growth of industry and commerce, more homes, and more energy usage. Keep in mind that the closure of Diablo will require increased use of natural gas to replace the 2200 megawatts of CO_2-free energy now produced by Diablo, some of which will be attributed to SLO County use. In any case the State assigned reductions per the table below on the next page. The County in aggregate will not achieve the 8% reduction by 2020, and projects a 3% reduction instead. Our recollection is that by the end of 2017 it had achieved no reduction and in fact had an increase. Presumably, and if it does not hit the 3% reduction, it all gets carried over to 2035 which would then be a 14% reduction unless the state moves the goalposts to a higher figure.

In 2018, CARB completed the second round of the regional target-setting process for California's 18 MPOs for the years 2020 and 2035. The San Luis Obispo region was assigned an 11-percent reduction target for 2035, and a 3-percent reduction target for 2020. The 2019 RTP is challenged to meet both targets through robust regional modeling of a preferred future land use pattern and corresponding set of transportation investments. Figure 13-1 shows both sets of regional GHG targets for the San Luis Obispo region.

Figure 13-1: CARB Regional GHG Targets for San Luis Obispo Region

TARGET YEAR	ORIGINAL REGIONAL GHG TARGET *(% reduction in per-capita GHG emissions, relative to 2005)*	REGIONAL GHG TARGET *(% reduction in per-capita GHG emissions, relative to 2005)*
2020	-8%	-3%
2035	-8%	-11%

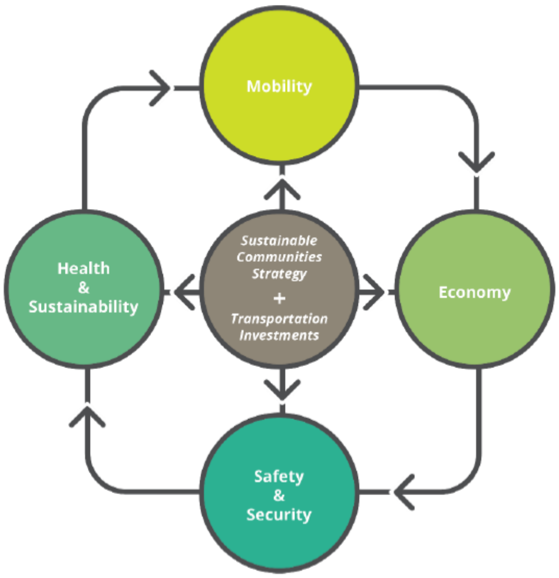
We note all this here because it sets the context for the 2 action items on the agenda as described under Items A-3 and A-4 below. Also see the related articles in this week's COLAB In Depth starting on page 19.

Item A-3: Final Draft Regional 2019 Transportation Plan (RTP). SLOCOG will adopt the 25-year RTP unanimously and without much comment except for praise for staff. Early signs are that the State will approve the plan, which means that the County and its seven cities will be eligible for State transportation funding and Federal transportation pass through funding under a complex and layered cafeteria of grant and recurring revenue programs containing hundreds of millions of dollars over the 25-year plan horizon. The programs and corresponding taxes have incrementally accumulated since the 1960's. The most recent is the SB 1 Fuel Tax increase approved by the Legislature in 2017, which adds funding for state highway and local road maintenance (about $5.2 billion per year and growing).

There are a number of elements of the Plan. One section deals with the allocation of $3.2 billion to various projects and services over the next 25 years. These are common sense needs although a significant portion is allocated to bus and van transit services, bike lanes, and rail services (" balanced inter modal strategy") designed to get people out of cars and light trucks, which are portrayed as the main villains in CO_2 generation. There is also some wahoo about electric vehicles, which is irrational since over 70% of electricity is generated from fossil fuel sources. In California the use of fossil fuels will grow as Diablo is closed. California does not count nuclear or large hydro as renewable sources. The fact that someone plugs her Tesla into a socket or the bus is all electric does not mean that less CO_2 is being generated. Further, and in this regard, please see the related article in this week's COLAB In Depth starting on page 19 below.

Two Important Chapters in the RTP: 1) The Sustainable Communities Strategy and 2) the Financial Element:

1. Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS): Tellingly, **t**he SLOCOG diagram on the left demonstrates how the SCS lies at the center of the entire RTP logic model. It appears to be a derivative of the UN, global warmist diagram, which has been popularized and used by literally hundreds of thousands of organizations in various forms over the past decade.



SLOCOG VERSION **ENVIRO SOCIALIST STANDARD VERSION**

The accompanying write-up states in part:

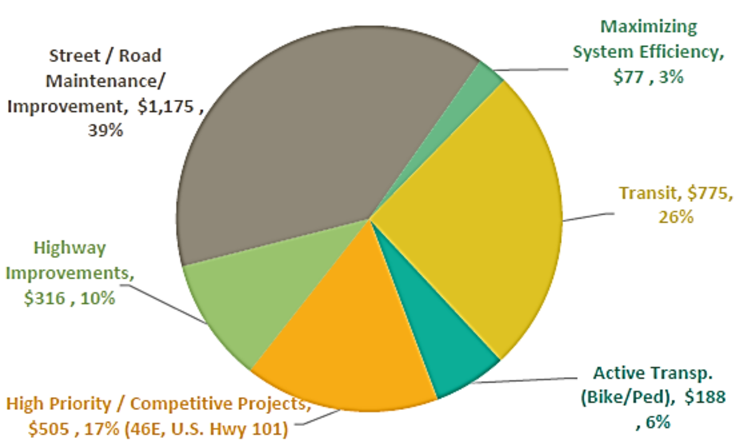
PLANNING FOR GROWTH

The Plan's *Sustainable Communities Strategy* supports the state's climate action goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through coordinated transportation and land use planning. The *Sustainable Communities Strategy* helps guide planning through analysis and recommendations for residential growth, employment centers, and transportation investments throughout the region.

By 2045, the region will add:

41,650 new people
18,000 new homes
18,200 new jobs

Figure 6-2: 2019 RTP Expenditure Categories ($ Millions)



Sustainable Communities Strategy & Health

- Encourages new development to improve the imbalance of jobs and housing in the region.
- Reduces Vehicle Miles Traveled per capita from 22.7 in 2005 to 20.7 in 2035, an 8.8 percent reduction.
- Reduces per capita carbon dioxide emissions by 11 percent, meeting the region's target of 11 percent.
- Reduces wear and tear on the highway system.
- Reduces precursors of ozone, which can negatively affect ecosystems and trigger respiratory health problems.
- Allows residents to get exercise while getting from point A to point B with improved sidewalks, multiuse paths, and bike lanes.
- Reduces injuries resulting from crashes.
- Preserves agricultural lands.
- Protects habitat and open space areas.
- Reduces toxics (Diesel Particulate Matter).
- Reduces Particulate Matter, PM2.5 and PM10.

The SLOCOG staff examined alternative development pattern models (varying housing densities) to see which ones could meet the goal of accommodating the projected 18,000 new homes and 18,200 new jobs and at the same time meet the State's CO_2 reduction requirement. This was a difficult task and seemed almost impossible. In the end, by jimmying the numbers a little, they came up with 30 percent larger lot/70 percent denser lot pattern which is proposed in the RTP.

The 2035 Preferred Growth Scenario, outlined in the *Sustainable Communities Strategy*, proposes that 70 percent of new housing units should be compact housing (which includes single-family homes with up to 6,000 sq. ft. lots), while the remaining 30 percent should be large-lot housing. The preferred scenario also suggests that less than 40 percent of new employment should be located in Central County. This scenario distributes new employment and housing to improve the region's jobs-housing imbalance.

Staff insists that its market analysis finds that this pattern is acceptable to the public. On the other hand COLAB has pointed out that some developers have come in for zoning permit revisions on previously approved projects to trade in their attached housing and replace it with detached housing in the near term.

Apparently the attached housing isn't selling too well. When SLOCOG staff insists that people will accept it, they are relying on the desperation of people who will accept anything to have a home. Of course the very existing urban containment policies, which have been in place for decades, will be further exacerbated by the RTP and will foment even more artificial scarcity.

As noted above, the global warmist ideology is used as justification for the denser development policy. Note that the earth has been getting warmer since the end of the last ice age 15,000 years ago. It will continue to get warmer until the next ice age begins in 5000 to 10,000 years no matter what anyone does.

In California, vehicles are the number one source of greenhouse gas emissions. Walkable, bikeable, transit-oriented communities reduce the need to drive and are more sustainable and efficient. With this in mind, the Plan integrates multiple transportation modes into an intermodal system that accommodates all types of users with a focus on livable communities and complete streets. Providing users with more choices allows more trips to occur outside single-occupant vehicles, helping the region achieve its 11 percent greenhouse gas per capita reduction target by 2035 as mandated by the California Air Resources Board.

Additionally, the RTP is designed to be adaptable and responsive to change. Performance measures address state and federal reporting requirements to ensure that emissions produced by our transportation system meet the targets established by federal and state agencies over time. The plan also contends with potential impacts of emerging technologies that may lead to pursuing new approaches and strategies, and retiring outdated ones.

WHAT ABOUT UBER, LYFT, SELF-DRIVING VEHICLES, GUIDED HIGHWAYS, HYDROGEN POWERED VEHICLES, THE CREATION OF NEW TOWNS ON HILLY NON PRIME AG LANDS, RETENTION OF DIABLO, DESALINATION, ETC?

We repeat Ed Ring's superb article from April 7, 2019 in the COLAB In Depth section on page 21, which describes an alternative public policy for housing (which people actually want), transportation, the economy, energy, water, and real sustainability.

2) Financial Element: This RTP chapter explains the likely funding sources of $3.036 billion over the 25-year life of the plan. It then provides the general purpose allocations, which are pretty much based on the Federal and State categorical rules embedded in the law as to allowed purposes.

Notwithstanding the survival of SB 1, which added about $1.1 billion to the SLOCOG's base funding scenario of $1.9 billion (for the $3 billion total), the write-up goes on for pages about all the unfunded needs and gaps. A great deal of the Financial Chapter is obviously a dedicated plea for a new ½ cent sales tax (a 12 percent increase). At the heart of the discussion is a reprise of the barely failed 2016 local Measure J attempt to provide "supplemental" funding.

The local measure would have contributed $25m/year to:

- Fix potholes, repave local streets, and relieve traffic congestion;
- Improve street, highway, and bridge safety.
- Make bike and transit improvements;
- Increase senior, veterans, disabled, and student transit; and
- Provide safe routes to school.

In the region, a half-percent sales tax increase would:

- Generate an estimated $762 million, escalated, over 25 years;
- Advance key transportation projects;
- Increase competitiveness to secure competitive grant funds; and
- Return the region's fair share of Senate Bill 1's SLPP funds ($200 million collected annually) by formula, which equates to $38 million over the life of the Plan.

Figure 6-4: *Measure J-16* Allocation

MEASURE J-16

For illustrative purposes only the San Luis Obispo transportation-specific self-help measure that failed, included:

- *10% for Transit,*
- *10% for Active Transportation,*
- *25% for Highways, and*
- *55% for Local Streets & Roads*

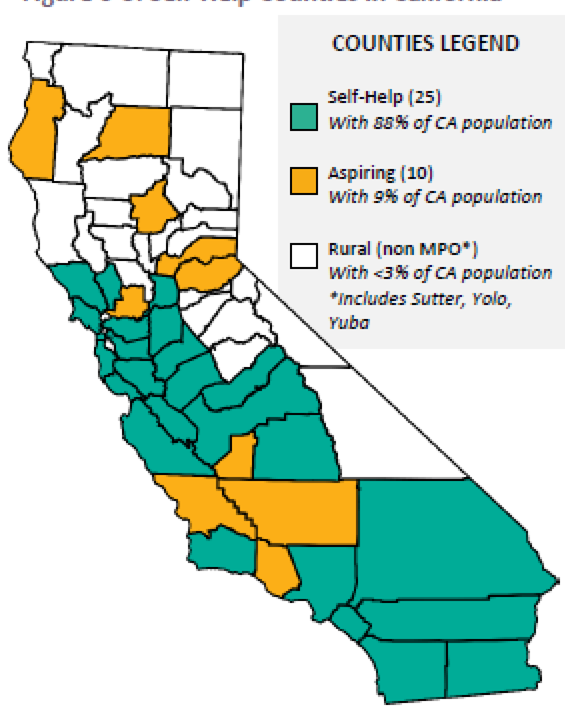
Figure 6-5: Expenditure Categories at Variable Ranges

SKETCH ALLOCATION	
Expenditure Categories	**Variable Range**
Highways and Regional	40% - 50%
Local Choice	35% - 45%
Transit	10% - 15%
Active Transportation	5% - 10%

Per the highlight box, staff believes that it has the go ahead to develop a scenario which includes a new tax measure for 2020. In part it is justified on the grounds that as a "self-help county," SLOCOG could compete for certain state bonus funds. It also provides a graphic which shows that just about everyone else is doing it.

A review of the initial draft financial chapter by the 2019 RTP Stakeholders, advisory committees, and Board resulted in the direction to staff to develop a scenario with supplemental funding – conditioned upon increased local funding – for transportation purposes, including mitigations.

Figure 6-3: Self-Help Counties in California



None of this will ever be enough, as the State Legislature is working on several bills to add a new tax on mileage driven. This is in part a realization that the proliferation of electric cars don't pay any gas taxes and the fossil fuel vehicles are becoming ever more efficient. If the State achieves its goal of eliminating fossil fueled cars, the whole system will have to be retooled.

Of course by raising taxes for roads and buses it will be easier for the County and the cities to keep raising salaries, adding staff, funding pension debt, promoting the homeless industrial complex, and delivering services by means of large civil service protected unionized labor forces which make heavy political campaign contributions.

We all love good roads, but further empowering the machine which is destroying California seems to be a high price.

Item A-4: Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan (RHNA). This is yet another state mandated program under which the cities and counties must demonstrate that they have zoned sufficient land to accommodate the growth projected in the RTP and in their own general plans. For many years the RHNA was produced on a rolling 4-year time horizon. This has now been increased to every 8 years. The staff report summarizes the system:

> The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Regional Housing Needs Allocation Plan (RHNAP) officially assigns the allocations for the development of housing units to each of its member jurisdictions. The total number of units required to be allocated by SLOCOG are based upon the California State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) Regional Housing Need Determination of 10,810 housing units for the SLOCOG region. The ten year projection period of the determination covers the 2019 through 2028 time frame.
>
> Within the RHNAP, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) establishes the total number of housing units that each of the seven cities and the county must plan for within the eight-year planning period (2021-2028). Based on the adopted RHNA, each city and the county must update their state-mandated housing element of its general plan - prior to December 31, 2020- to provide adequate general plan and zoning capacity for their respective allocation, by income category.

Key factors in this cycle's version include:

1. All the local jurisdictions already have enough zoned land in their inventories, so there is no stretch, let alone incentive to expand the urban areas and produce homes that people really want at a price they can afford. Apparently all the jurisdictions are okay with their allocation.

2. The law does not require that the homes actually get built. When viewed in the context of the expensive and time consuming permitting process (even for existing lots), the whole thing is simply, and as we have said before, an expensive time consuming kabuki dance or ritual to placate some bureaucratic deities.

Regional Housing Need Allocation

Jurisdiction	Total Allocation	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate
		24.6%	15.5%	18.0%	41.9%
Arroyo Grande	692	170	107	125	290
Atascadero	843	207	131	152	353
Grover Beach	369	91	57	66	155
Morro Bay	391	96	61	70	164
Paso Robles	1,446	356	224	260	606
Pismo Beach	458	113	71	83	192
San Luis Obispo	3,354	825	520	604	1,405
Unincorportated	3,256	801	505	586	1,364
Regional Total	**10,810**	**2,659**	**1,676**	**1,946**	**4,529**

2019 RHNA: Jan. 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2028 (10 years)

Stack-and-Pack CE 180 style:

Actual Regression? An Ancient Roman mixed use building with commercial on the "walkable" street level and apartments for working class and lower middle class tenants upstairs. Note running water out front and granite curbs. The upper income folks lived in the suburbs on acreage, yet modern planners and lemming electeds think they have found the holy grail of urban life in 2000 year old living patterns which evolved prior to electricity, modern communications, steam engines, cars, railroads, regional and national supply systems, and all the rest.

Suburban Living CE 180 Style:

Kind of like north SLO County. Later the barbarian invasions forced contraction to hard urban limit lines (with walls). That mode of life is called medieval – overcrowding with tons of typhus, plague, dysentery, and crime – just like some parts of contemporary LA.

False Advertising: Ironically, the banner across the top of SLOCOG's home page depicts a modest rural type home in a bucolic setting. But SLOCOG'S adopted policies render it almost impossible for the market (not to mention land use regulations) to produce such places. Here they beckon the American dream that they are working to obliterate. In truth they should show stack-and-pack at the top of their home page.

The banner should depict the policy truth – back to retro mill town housing of the late 19th and early 20th centuries as you sweat your way to work on a trolley.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

There was no Board of Supervisors Meeting last week. The other agencies were dormant as well.

COLAB IN DEPTH

IN FIGHTING THE TROUBLESOME, LOCAL DAY-TO-DAY ASSAULTS ON OUR FREEDOM AND PROPERTY, IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE LARGER UNDERLYING IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CAUSES AND FORCES

GREEN PIGS TAKING AMERICA FOR A RIDE!

BY ANDY CALDWELL

The American Energy Alliance reports that 79% of the electric vehicle tax credits were claimed by households with an adjusted gross income of more than $100,000 per year, according to a study by the Pacific Research Institute, and that a hugely disproportionate share of these vehicles were bought in California? This explains why 67% of voters throughout the rest of the country are opposed to these tax credits which cost billions of dollars.

What all this means is that relatively well-off people are assuaging their environmental conscience at the expense of the little people! Moreover, in spite of various taxpayer subsidies to the manufacturers, on top of the $7,500 tax break to the consumers, these electric vehicles are then sold at a tremendous loss by the manufacturers. The manufacturers sell the vehicles at a loss by hiking the price on the rest of their fleet, that is, the vehicles that people who earn less than $100,000 can afford and want to buy!

To fully understand this tangled web of tax breaks and wealth transfers, one must take into account the federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) standards. The CAFÉ standards dictate to auto manufacturers a mandated target intended to reduce the average fuel consumption of their fleet. In 2011, the average fuel standard was 24 miles per gallon. The Obama administration forced an exorbitantly high standard of 54 miles per gallon by 2025. The problem is that most Americans still love SUV's and pickup trucks, which don't get much more than 20 mpg, if that. Consequently, the manufacturers had to virtually give away electric cars to bring up their averages.

Now, contrast the poorest state in the country, Mississippi with California. In 2017, the residents in Mississippi purchased a grand total of 128 electric vehicles! In the same year, Californians purchased 95,000! Californians have been going hog wild, as in pigs at the trough for the $7500 tax credit, due in part to their overwrought attempts to prove how green they are, and in order to save money on our extremely high gas prices. Ultimately, that means poor folks in other states are paying higher taxes in order to support the tax credit inordinately accruing to Californians and our higher fuel prices, and they are paying more for their vehicles via the CAFÉ surcharge.

Another lesson lost on fans of electric vehicles? Electricity is a secondary source of energy that must be produced by a primary source. That is, plugging a car into an outlet doesn't make the car green unless the electricity was created by wind or solar according to radical environmental purists. Nevertheless, 77% of America's electricity supply comes from fossil fuels! Another 15% comes from nuclear and hydroelectric. What that ultimately means, in reality, is that only 10% of these so-called green vehicles are running on renewable energy!

Finally, if you consider the enormous cradle-to-grave impacts of both the energy and mineral resources necessary to build and utilize wind and solar, and to dispose of the same, namely the batteries and solar panels, these energy sources aren't very green at all!

Andy Caldwell is the executive director of COLAB and the host of The Andy Caldwell Show weekdays from 3-5 pm on News Press Radio AM1290.

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GRAND BARGAINS TO MAKE CALIFORNIA AFFORDABLE

BY EDWARD RING

California's political elites are at odds with history and the natural preferences of millions of Californians

The good life in California is out of reach to ordinary people. The reason for that is simple: homes cost too much, energy costs too much, water costs too much, and transportation infrastructure is inadequate. In each of these critical categories, however, grand bargains are possible that would bring California's cost of living back down to earth.

Unaffordable housing is the most obvious, talked about problem. The solutions being considered in Sacramento are either inadequate or flawed. The most significant proposal currently being considered in the state legislature is SB 50, which would require cities and counties to allow apartment building redevelopment in any place that is either within a half-mile of a rail transit station, within a quarter-mile of a "high-frequency bus stop," or within a "job-rich" neighborhood. SB 50 would also remove the requirement for developers to provide adequate parking. It is possible that SB 50 will pass. When it does, developers will be able to purchase homes in qualifying residential neighborhoods, demolish them, and construct apartment buildings up to 55 feet in height.

There are a lot of things to criticize about SB 50, most notably the fact that it overrides local control of these zoning decisions. More to the point, there is the disruptive impact to residents who invested their lifetime earnings into paying off a mortgage to own a home in a spacious, quiet neighborhood, who will see that ambience destroyed. Not only should these residents be able to rely on the zoning laws that were in place when they purchased their homes, but it is likely they cannot afford to move. If they sell, they will have to pay taxes on any profit over $500K, and once they've moved, they will no longer have California's property tax protections for long-time property owners. Fixed income retirees will be harmed the most by SB 50.

Not everything SB 50's opponents bring up is necessarily valid, however. The accusation that SB 50 will just cause more gentrification is based on cases where new high rise developments were made in the heart of downtown areas, on some of the most expensive real estate on earth. Of course those developments will only attract wealthy buyers. But whenever new housing units are put on the market, basic laws of supply and demand still apply. The wealthy buyers who choose these ultra expensive new units will not be purchasing the alternatives. Whenever more homes are built, then up and down the value chain, from exclusive penthouses to trailer parks, buyers have more choices.

The key factor in reducing housing prices in California depends on increasing the supply of homes. SB 50 recognizes this, but only addresses half the problem. SB 50 increases the density of cities, but it doesn't touch the other fundamental problem, which is the need to expand the footprint of cities. Because of this, it is unbalanced, and as such, it is going to cause far more havoc on existing neighborhoods than would otherwise be necessary. And it won't fix the problem. No realistic assessment of housing policies, or the history of urbanization, can fail to acknowledge that as populations increase, existing neighborhoods are disrupted. Increasing housing density in the urban core as more people arrive is inevitable. But at the same time, outlying suburbs must be allowed to expand.

There is Plenty of Land in California for New Homes

Here is where the fundamental assumptions of California's political elites are at odds with history and at odds with the natural preferences of millions of ordinary Californians. By forcing development into urban service boundaries, not only does it become far more difficult to create an adequate supply of new homes, but millions of people who want to raise families in detached single family dwellings with yards are denied that opportunity.

The justifications for denying urban expansion are not beyond debate. First of all, there is no shortage of land in California, which is only five percent, urbanized. Entire new cities can spring up along the I-5 and Highway 101 corridors, along vast stretches of mostly empty land stretching over 500 miles from north to south. Basic facts contradict the arguments for "smart growth."

Encompassing 164,000 square miles, California is only 5 percent urbanized. According to the American Farmland Trust, California has 25,000 square miles of grazing land (15 percent), 28,000 square miles of non-irrigated cropland (17 percent), and 14,000 square miles of irrigated cropland (9 percent). The rest, 54 percent, is forest, oak woodland, desert, and other open space.

Urban Density Scenarios

Potential land use impact based on
California's population increasing by ten million

Dense	*Normal*	*Low*	
10	10	10	**Total New Residents (millions)**
3	3	3	**Residents per Home**
10	4	2	**Homes per Acre**
4	2	1	**Area Ratio - Other Urban / Homes**
2,604	**3,906**	**5,208**	**Square Miles Additional Urban Area**
1.6%	**2.4%**	**3.2%**	***% of total land area***
10%	**16%**	**21%**	***% of grazing land***
9%	**14%**	**19%**	***% of unirrigated cropland***
19%	**28%**	**37%**	***% of irrigated cropland***

The above chart depicts three urban growth scenarios, all of them assuming California experiences a net population increase of 10 million, and that all new residents on average live three people to a household (the current average in California is 2.96 occupants per household). For each scenario, the additional square miles of urban land are calculated.

As the chart shows, adding *10 million* new residents under the "low" density scenario would only use up 3.2 percent of California's land. There is no reason why any of this growth has to occur on irrigated cropland. For example, if *all* the growth were concentrated onto grazing land—much which is being taken out of production anyway, it would only consume 21 percent of it. If all the growth were to fall onto non-irrigated cropland, which is not prime agricultural land, it would only use up 19 percent of that. Much growth, of course, could be in the 58 percent of California not used either for farming or ranching.

The grand bargain? Streamline the process for reasonable urban densification but mitigate the impact (and enhance the benefit) by also streamlining the process for urban expansion onto open land.

Competitive Development of Enabling Infrastructure

Policymakers might also strike grand bargains in the areas of water, energy and transportation, all critical to making and keeping California affordable as the population grows. In all three areas, not only are policy solutions available, but the array of solutions increases every decade as new technologies become available.

Creating Abundant, Affordable Water

The following chart depicts several projects that could be funded through a combination of revenue bonds – to attract private financing, and general obligation bonds – to reduce costs to ratepayers. While these projects are expensive, they are well within the capacity of California's economy to support, and if constructed, they would guarantee consumers affordable water abundance for several decades, possibly forever. And it is important to note, these are *California* cost estimates. With appropriate reforms to provide relief from litigation and overregulation, these costs could be dramatically reduced. The capital costs for desalination plants in Israel, for example, per unit of capacity, came in at *one-sixth* what the costs were for the Carlsbad plant in California.

Creating Water Abundance in California

Projects and estimated cost,
MAF = million acre feet

MAF/yr	*$=B*	*Projects to Increase Supplies of Water*
0.50	5.0	Build the Sites Reservoir
0.25	3.0	Build the Temperance Flat Reservoir
0.50	2.0	Raise the height of the Shasta Dam
1.00	7.5	So Cal water recycling plants to potable standards
1.00	15.0	So Cal desalination plants
0.50	7.5	Central and Northern California water recycling plants to potable standards
1.00	7.5	Desalination plants on Central and North coasts
0.75	5.0	Facilities to capture runoff for aquifer recharge
5.50	52.5	*subtotal - water supply*
		Projects to Increase Resiliency of Water Distribution Infrastructure
	5.0	Retrofit every dam in California to modern standards, including Oroville and San Luis
	7.5	Aquifer mitigation to eliminate toxins with focus on Los Angeles Basin
	5.0	Retrofit of existing aqueducts
	7.0	Seismic retrofits to levees statewide, with focus on the Delta
	24.5	*subtotal - water resiliency*
	77.0	*total - water supply and resiliency*

For water, as with everything else that matters, compromise on a grand scale is necessary to negotiate a grand bargain. Environmentalists would have to accept a few more reservoirs and desalination plants in exchange for plentiful water allocations to threatened ecosystems. Farmers would have to pay more for water in exchange for undiminished quantities. While private financing and revenue bonds could cover much of the expense, taxpayers would bear the burden of some new debt – but in exchange for permanent access to affordable, secure, and most abundant water.

Creating Abundant, Affordable Energy

It is difficult to imagine how any state, or nation, could do worse than California's done when it comes to providing electricity to its residents. With that ingratiating introduction to the topic, here's why: Renewable energy has to be priced based on providing a 24 hour, 12 months per year, uninterrupted supply. As it is, renewable energy providers are permitted to sell their electrons based on their direct costs, and utilities are required to purchase it. Meanwhile, when the sun goes down or the wind dies down, utilities have to find power elsewhere. This is extremely expensive, because these backup plants cannot produce continuous power, meaning their construction costs and fixed overhead costs have to be priced into part-time operation.

Michael Shellenberger, an energy expert and advocate for nuclear power with impeccable environmentalist credentials, recently published a blistering takedown of renewable energy in *Forbes*. Entitled "Why Renewables Advocates Protect Fossil Fuel Interests, Not The Climate," the article provides revealing details about how fossil fuel corporations are pouring money into environmentalist nonprofits that advocate renewables. And why not? By stigmatizing nuclear power into oblivion, the only reliable way to balance intermittent flows of renewable energy is to build more natural gas fueled power plants.

The solution to providing California with abundant energy is to retrofit, expand and recommission existing nuclear power complexes and build new ones, along with building more natural gas power plants. The grand bargain? Environmentalists get cleaner air, but have to accept nuclear power. Special interests that advocate renewables can still sell their products, but have to price in the costs for them to cover their nightly and seasonal production deficits. Fossil fuel interests can continue to operate, but have to compete with nuclear power. And California's power consumers will see prices in a competitive market come back down to national standards.

Creating Effective Transportation for the 21st Century

California's roads are poorly maintained and inadequate. Meanwhile, the most egregious waste of public funds perhaps in history, the "bullet train," continues to hang on to life as a truncated boondoggle still planned to connect Merced to Bakersfield. Explaining the folly of high speed rail in California may also explain the benefits of alternative solutions.

Within a few decades, self-driving cars, some owned for personal use, others privately owned but serving the public, will zoom along smart hyperlanes at speeds well in excess of 100 miles per hour. They will convoy with each other, running close together, using linked navigation systems, to facilitate far more throughput per lane mile than today's freeways. Overhead, within a few decades, electric drones will shuttle people to and from their chosen destinations at speeds well in excess of 200 miles per hour. And far overhead, at around 50,000 feet, supersonic planes , electric VTOL/turbojet hybrids, will fly at speeds well in excess of 1,000 miles per hour.

This is the future of transportation in California, a future that demands upgraded roads and new modes of FAA administered airspace. As for rail, upgrading existing rail might have tremendous practical value. But why take a bullet train, when within a decade or two you'll be able to dial up an aerial Uber on your cell phone, and at speeds exceeding the most optimistic HSR projections, fly from any rooftop in San Francisco to any rooftop in Los Angeles?

A Completely New Mentality is Needed for 21st Century Development

The good life can be recaptured for all Californians. The weather's still great. The land is still beautiful and bountiful. The economy remains diverse and resilient. But California's current policies have stifled innovation and created artificial scarcity of literally every primary necessity – not just housing, but water, energy and transportation. Each year, to comply with legislative mandates, government agencies and private developers alike spend billions of dollars to pay attorneys, consultants and bureaucrats, instead of paying engineers and heavy equipment operators to actually build things. The innovation that persists despite California's unwelcoming policy environment is inspiring.

California's policymakers have adhered relentlessly to a philosophy of limits. Less water consumption. Less energy use. Urban containment. Densification. Fewer cars and more mass transit. But it isn't working. It isn't working because California has the highest cost of living in the nation. Using less water and energy never rewards consumers, because the water and energy never were the primary cost within their utility bills – the cost of the infrastructure and overhead is always the primary cost. And nearly all these policies – high speed rail is the perfect example – diminish if not ignore potential technology breakthroughs on the horizon.

Within the next few decades, there will be modular, plug-and-play desalination units that coastal municipalities can put offshore to supply abundant water to consumers. In turn, these desalination units can be powered by modular, safe, plug-and-play nuclear reactors, scaled to whatever size is required, and nearly maintenance free. It doesn't end there. Within the next fifty years or so, energy will be beamed from orbiting solar power stations to earth-based receivers to deliver uninterrupted electricity. We're also probably less than fifty years from having commercial, scalable fusion power.

A completely new mentality is required, incorporating a vision of abundance instead of scarcity that encompasses every vital area of resource consumption. A completely different approach that could cost less than what it might cost to fully implement scarcity mandates. An approach that would improve the quality of life for all Californians. Without abandoning but merely scaling back the ambition of new conservation and efficiency mandates, embrace supply oriented solutions as well.

These are the grand bargains that would make California affordable again.

* * *

Edward Ring is a co-founder of the California Policy Center and served as its first president. This article originally appeared on the website [California Globe](). This article first appeared in the California Globe of April 1, 2019.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

10th ANNIVERSARY
COLAB
San Luis Obispo County

Disastrous anti-oil bill!!!

Assembly Bill 345, which is working its way through the CA State legislature, proposes to shut down the oil and gas industry in this state based upon the junk science supposition that oil and gas operations pose a health risk to neighboring properties. The bill is part of the effort to "keep oil in the ground" at all costs to our society, and believe me, the cost to keep oil in the ground is tremendous.

Oil and gas operations are an essential component of our energy supply, a mainstay of our economy, a cornerstone of the tax base, and the value of the same is protected by our constitution. That is, oil and gas deposits are privately owned minerals, which can't be taken away, without just compensation.

I have never quite understood the religious fervor with which extreme environmentalists have attacked the use of natural products including oil, gas, and coal. These products enabled the onset of the industrial revolution which lifted mankind out of millennia of poverty and misery. That is, these fuels vastly improved everyone's quality of life, extended our life span and saved countless lives in a number of ways, including by way of revolutionizing our ability to grow and store food, and protect us from the elements!

Moreover, the push to replace these lifesaving fuels any time soon with renewables is a pipe dream. This is due to the fact that, despite decades of research and tens of billion dollars invested, we still don't have the technology available to realistically store wind and solar power for use throughout the day and night, as these sources can only produce energy for a few hours a day, in limited locales, if that!

Nevertheless, the California State Legislature continues to try and find a way to shut down our oil and gas industry. This is simply reckless. Oil and gas resources in this state are privately owned and the state can't take away the value of this property, known as mineral rights, without compensating the owners of the same.

In addition to being a valuable property right, it goes without saying that oil and gas are an essential energy source for our state. What will we do without locally produced oil and gas? Are we going to import 100% of what we need to fuel our vehicles, planes, trains, factories, and homes? We don't have the infrastructure to do so. How much higher do you want your auto and home fuel bills to go?

The oil and gas industry also represents one of the best paying job sectors in our state. Many of the people employed in this sector of our economy make six figure salaries with only a high school education! Where are they going to find equivalent work?
Finally, the oil and gas sector pays inordinately high taxes. Venoco and Exxon Mobil were the top two tax payers in our county before they were shut down by virtue of the pipeline break three years ago. The county and our local schools are losing millions of dollars in revenue as a result. It is not too early to contact the Governor's office and ask him to be waiting for AB345 with his veto pen!

Andy Caldwell
COLAB

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MIKE BROWN ADVOCATES BEFORE THE BOS

VICTOR DAVIS HANSON ADDRESSES A COLAB FORUM

DAN WALTERS EXPLAINS SACTO MACHINATIONS AT A COLAB FORUM

See the presentation at the link: https://youtu.be/eEdP4cvf-zA

AUTHOR & NATIONALLY SYNDICATED COMMENTATOR BEN SHAPIRO APPEARED AT A COLAB ANNUAL DINNER

NATIONAL RADIO AND TV COMMENTATOR HIGH HEWITT AT COLAB DINNER

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(Revised 2/2017)