

# COLAB

San Luis Obispo County



The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

**WEEKLY UPDATE  
MARCH 15 - 21, 2020**

11th ANNUAL

**COLAB**  
San Luis Obispo County

**DINNER & FUNDRAISER**

**Steve Hayward**  
UC Santa Barbara Conservative Senior Resident Scholar  
World So Crazy, ... Again?

Alex M...

5:15 pm Social ...  
6:15 pm Filet Mignon Dinner ...

\$120 per person | \$1,200 per Table (Reserved ...)

*For tickets*  
Reservations and payment can be made at:  
<http://www.colabslo.org/support.asp>

Or mail your check to:  
COLAB SLO: PO Box 13601, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

*Cocktail Attire Optional*

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(805) 548-0340 | colabslo@gmail.com



**POSTPONED!**

TO AVOID RISK EXPOSURE TO COVID-19 BY A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, AND PER THE ORDERS OF VARIOUS SAFETY AUTHORITIES, THE COLAB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HAS DETERMINED TO POSTPONE THE 2020 ANNUAL DINNER FUNDRAISER WHICH HAD BEEN SET FOR THURSDAY MARCH 26, 2020. WE WILL BE IN COMMUNICATION WITH YOU REGARDING REFUNDS AND FUTURE EVENTS. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR TREMENDOUS SUPPORT OVER THE YEARS AND LOOK FORWARD TO SERVING AS YOUR ALL REGIONAL AGENCY GOVERNMENT WATCHDOG IN THE FUTURE. PLEASE CONTACT US AT (805) 548 - 0340 OR [colabslo@gmail.com](mailto:colabslo@gmail.com) IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS



**ONWARD!**

**THIS WEEK**

**SPECIAL BOS MEETING RE COVID-19**

**BOARD WILL RATIFY A STATE OF EMERGENCY & AND LIMIT EVENTS  
(9AM TUESDAY MARCH 17, 2020)**

**SUPERVISOR HILL SPECULATION**

**NO REGULAR BOS MEETING**

**LAFCO TO RECEIVE UPDATE ON CITY OF PASO  
ROBLES ANNEXATION PLAN**

**LAST WEEK**

**2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER FINANCIAL REPORT**  
**FOR CURRENT FY 2019-20 – RECEIVED WITHOUT COMMENT**  
**DID NOT DEAL WITH POTENTIAL COVID-19 SHORTFALLS**

**UPDATE ON STEPS IN HOUSING STRATEGY**  
**SOME HAVE BEEN COMPLETED & SOME ARE UNDERWAY**

**GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND AND TAX HIKE FOR**  
**HOUSING PUSHED FORWARD**

**BOARD WILL PROBABLY PLACE THEM ON NOVEMBER BALLOT**  
**LIBRARIES BOND & TAX WILL ALSO GET A SHOT**

**REVISED MINING REGULATIONS ADOPTED**  
**NOT SURE THEY REALLY PROTECT AND PROMOTE MINING**

**PLANNING COMMISSION DENIED NEW CANNABIS**  
**FARM EAST OF PASO ROBLES**

**SLO COLAB IN DEPTH**  
**SEE PAGE 20**

**CALIFORNIA IS A CRUEL MEDIEVAL STATE**

*The Golden State has become a cruel and unusual place because  
callousness and narcissism were redefined as caring and compassion.*

**By Victor Davis Hanson**

# **SUSTAINABLE DECADENCE**

## **‘THE DECADENT SOCIETY’**

**BY ANDREW J. BACEVICH**



# **CALIFORNIANS REJECT NEW TAXES AND BORROWING**

**BY EDWARD RING**

## **THIS WEEK’S HIGHLIGHTS**

**Special Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (Just Scheduled) 9 AM**

**Item 1 - Request to adopt a resolution ratifying Proclamation of Local Emergency and delegate authority to terminate the proclamation to the County of San Luis Obispo Emergency Services Director. All Districts.**

**Item 2 - Request to adopt resolution ratifying Health Officer's Declaration of Local Health Emergency and delegate to the County Health Officer the authority to terminate the Declaration of Local Health Emergency. All Districts.**

It is expected that the meeting will be short. It is possible that staff will update the Board on the COVID-19 situation in the County, closures, and preparation status.

Date and Time of Special Meeting:	March 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
Place of Special Meeting:	Board of Supervisors Chambers, 1055 Monterey Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93408
Business to be considered:	See agenda below.

### **Supervisor Hill Speculation (Not Scheduled)**

So far (and as of Saturday March 14, 2020), the County has provided no official explanation of what happened to its Board Chairman, his medical condition, his whereabouts, when he might return to duty, or anything else. A spokes-person simply stated that he was released from the hospital and is under a physician's care. The County justifies this lack of information on the basis of privacy concerns. This is bizarre, as Hill is the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors (the highest elected local official in the County) and has demonstrated successive episodes of erratic behavior over the years. Once someone takes on the mantle of visible public office, he or she forsakes the usual confidentiality customs. Hill is not exactly a Typist I in a remote office.

As a result there is much speculation.

Reportedly FBI agents arrived at the County Administration building before opening hour and tossed Hill's office. Later that day medical units were dispatched to Hill's residence. It is alleged that the police had to break the door down to enter, and the Hill was found unconscious, a suspected suicide attempt.

You would think that the County has access to the presenting diagnosis by the paramedics, and Health Information Privacy Act concerns aside, it would inform the public of the status of its chief elected official.

County leadership and the SLO Tribune (which has gone out of its way to provide air cover for Hill for years) are going along as if he had an appendicitis or wrist fracture.

Meanwhile speculation about a successor has ramped up with the notion that if the position were to become vacant, Pismo City Councilman and Coastal Commissioner Eric Howell would be a likely pick for appointment by Governor Newsome.

On the other hand folks could walk into the next Board meeting and find Hill smiling and glad handing as if nothing had ever happened. It is of course unknown if the FBI will make a case or if arrests and indictments will come down.





**YOU FIND OUT WHEN THEY COME FOR YOU OR IF YOU BECOME A SNITCH. NO DOUBT THE LATTER GROUP HAS ALREADY SPILLED THEIR GUTS.**

**No Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 (Not Scheduled)**

The next scheduled meeting is set for Tuesday, March 24, 2020.

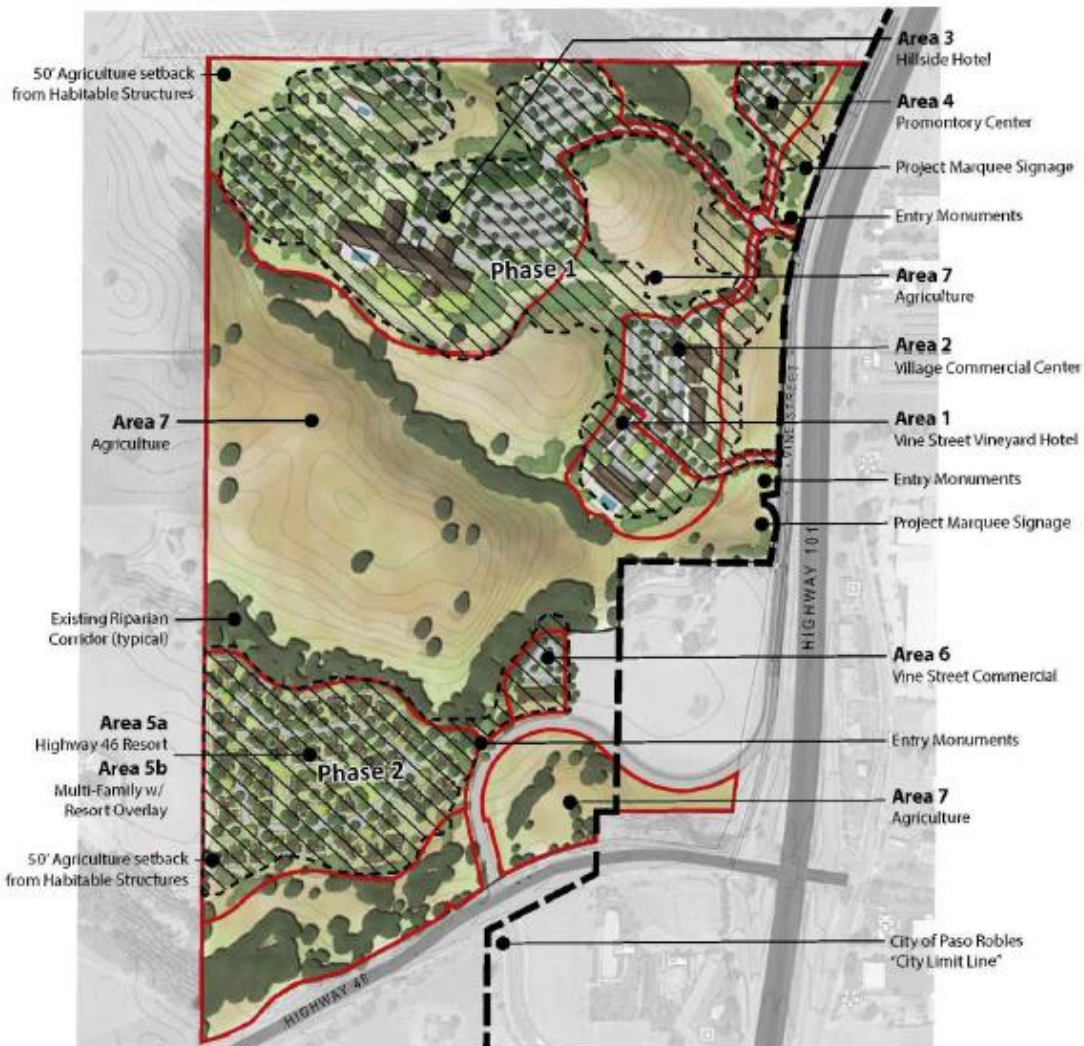
**Local Agency Formation Commission Meeting of Thursday, March 19, 2020**

**Item B-1: STUDY SESSION #2: GATEWAY-SOI AMENDMENT AND ANNEXATION TO THE CITY OF PASO ROBLES.** The City of Paso Robles plans to annex vacant land at the intersection of Highway 101 and Route 46. The item is not on the agenda for action but is posted as an informational item for the Commission. The item text describes the project as largely hospitality and commercial.

*The Paso Robles Gateway Project includes several components: (i) a Hillside Destination Resort Hotel and Conference Center, (ii) a Vine Street Vineyard Hotel and Village, (iii) a High Density Resort Community, (iv) two distinct visitor and community serving commercial centers, and (v) a 32-acre on-site agricultural conservation easement. The Project will include up to 425 transient units, a maximum of 80 which may be permitted as residential units (resort community), approximately 65,000 square feet of retail and office space with 17 workforce residential units in conjunction with the retail uses, 10,600 square feet of restaurant uses, and over 30,000 square feet of conference space.*

During a prior review the Commission express concerns about affordable housing, water, and traffic.

Figure 1 – Project Site Plan & Phasing Plan



## LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

### Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, March 10, 2020 (Completed)

**Item 19 - Submittal of the FY 2019-20 Second Quarter Financial Status Report.** The Board received the report without much comment. The potential revenue shortfalls due to the growing COVID-19 pandemic have not been factored in. Travel bans, event bans, and people's reluctance to go out to public places could begin to have an accumulative impact on sales and hotel taxes.

If the stock market keeps declining and then remains down, Pension cost problems could emerge next year.

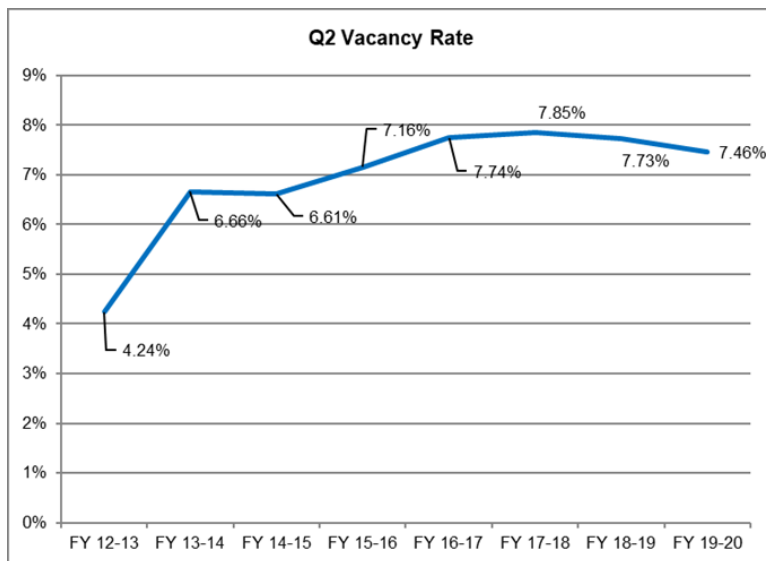
Complications will arise if the County workforce must work from home. Firefighters, deputy sheriffs, custodial deputies, nurses, and other health workers cannot work from home.

**Background:** At halfway through its fiscal year, the County is pretty much on track with respect to both revenues and expenditures. The largest problems include overtime and unbudgeted overtime due to vacancies in the Sheriff's Department and revenue shortfalls in the golf operation exacerbated by debt service payments for prior improvements at the Dairy Creek Golf Course.

There are a number of expenditure increases in Social Services, including General Relief (welfare for people who don't qualify for the big State /Federal programs), increased costs in CalWORKs (the main welfare program for families), and increased expenditures for foster care. Separately from the cost issues, these trends suggest increasing poverty or other economic dislocations even within a booming economy.

Some of the Social Services increases will be offset by increased formula State reimbursements and will not impact the General Fund. Overall, the County should end the year with a balanced budget and without too much trouble. The large interdepartmental transfers will occur at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report in May, when unbudgeted salary increases will have to be made up from salary savings in departments which are under running their budgets due to vacancies and/or transfers from the

contingency account.



*The County turnover rate at the end of the second quarter was 14.9%. This equates to 394 employee separations. By comparison, the turnover rate for the first quarter was 14.4%. The County has seen a steady increase in turnover rate in recent years. While employee engagement surveys show that employee satisfaction remains high, changes in the job market, challenges with cost of living, and changing employee priorities present challenges in maintaining a low turnover rate. The County currently has efforts underway to explore creative*

*recruitment and retention solutions to address these issues.*

The resulting vacancy rate is 7.46%. The paragraph above suggests that there is pressure to increase the cost of salaries and benefits. In the big picture and given the cost, the historical model of a rigid civil service bureaucracy has become obsolete. Government agencies must seek to contract with private sector and not-for-profit providers for services. Moreover there are far too many governmental agencies enjoying duplicative overhead in California for the available revenue tax and fee base. The



State, 58 counties, 450 cities, 977 school districts, and thousands of special districts cannot be sustained.

**Authorized staffing increased in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter**

**Position Allocation Changes**

<b>FY 2019-2020</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>
<b>Quarter Start</b>	2,796.50	2,792.50
<b>FTE Additions</b>	22.75	29.00
<b>FTE Deletions</b>	26.75	19.00
<b>Quarter End</b>	2,792.50	2,802.50
<b>Net Change</b>	-4.00	+10.00
<b>% Change</b>	-0.14%	+0.36%

**FY 2019-20 Financial Impact of PAL Changes:**

- Total Expenditures = \$1,549,448
- Total GF Impact = \$104,790

**MAJOR POLICY ON THIS AGENDA BELOW**

**NOTE:** Items 20 and 21 below are interrelated and describe major policy initiatives with respect to housing and related infrastructure. These should be read carefully as they summarize work to date, work in progress, and new funding and tax increase proposals.

**Item 20 - Request to 1) receive and file an update on policy and funding initiatives to address affordable housing needs in the county; and 2) provide direction to staff regarding use of funding options for affordable housing.** The Board listened to the presentation, asked questions, and commented frequently. Everyone agreed that the report and its underlying strategic approach were excellent.

**Background:** As far back as 2016, the Board of Supervisors majority recognized that the left progressive housing policies of the State and San Luis Obispo County were and are failures. Programs such the so-called In Lieu Housing Fee (a tax) do not produce much revenue for affordable home government subsidies and at the same time make the market rate housing more expensive. To this end the Board majority embarked on the development of a more comprehensive strategy. This Board item provides a summary of what that strategy has accomplished so far and what further steps are underway or planned.

These efforts are summarized in the tables below:

Table 1: Overview of County Funding and Policy Initiatives to Address Affordable Housing

Category	Initiative	Description	Status
Policy	1. Regional Infrastructure and Housing Plan	Funded a Limited Term Principal Administrative Analyst position to prepare a Regional Infrastructure and Housing Plan with local partner agencies. Note: Under State law, RHNA exchanges are allowed between willing City(ies) and unincorporated areas/ County. While the process is complex, potential RHNA exchanges may be considered, pending willingness by participating agencies and pending following certain required steps.	In progress, slated for adoption in late-2020/ early-2021
	2. Housing Element Update (2020-2028)	Update Housing Element to facilitate housing production for existing and future residents in the unincorporated county.	Scheduled for Board hearings in fall of 2020
	3. Agricultural Worker Housing Ordinance	Amend the Agricultural Worker Housing Ordinance to remove regulatory barriers and streamline the construction of group quarters housing for agricultural workers.	Scheduled for Board hearing on April 7, 2020
	4. Movable Tiny House Ordinance	Evaluate options to allow tiny homes on wheels as a type of Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance (ADU).	In progress, slated for Board consideration in late-2020
	5. Density Bonus Ordinance	Amend County Density Bonus Ordinance to conform with the State density bonus law.	Scheduled for Board hearings in summer of 2020

	6. County California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines	Amended the County's guidelines for implementing the CEQA to improve coordination between the County and project developers during the environmental review process.	<b>Completed on July 16, 2019</b>
	7. Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance - Phase II	Amend the County's ADU Ordinance to remove regulatory barriers and streamline the construction of ADUs consistent with State law.	<b>Completed on January 28, 2020</b>
	8. Ministerial versus Discretionary Project Matrix	A tool to assist builders with identifying the types of projects that can be developed without the time and cost associated with a discretionary land use permit.	<b>Completed on August 21, 2018</b>
	9. First-time Homebuyers Program	Evaluate whether the County should continue offering a first-time homebuyers program. Staff recommended continuing a limited version of the program given limited funding availability.	<b>Completed on August 21, 2018</b>

Funding			
	1. Authorize affordable housing bond feasibility study	Hire consultant to consider feasibility of placing a \$40M affordable housing bond on the November 2020 ballot.	Presentation of study results on March 10, 2020
	2. Authorize a vacation rental impact fee nexus study	Hire consultant to determine impact of vacation rentals on affordable housing needs and whether a fee would be justified.	Scheduled for Board consideration in May 2020
	3. Consolidated Plan (2020-2024)	Update Consolidated Plan to prioritize housing and homelessness when allocating CDBG and HOME funds.	Scheduled for Board consideration on May 5, 2020
	4. Amend inclusionary housing "in-lieu" fees	Revise fee structure to exempt homes up to 2,200 square feet and apply gradually higher fees to larger houses.	<b>Completed on March 12, 2019</b>
	5. Waive and defer fees for affordable housing	Authorize Director of Planning and Building to waive permit fees for affordable housing.	<b>Completed on August 21, 2018</b>
		Exempt affordable housing from public facility fees.	<b>Completed on November 5, 2019</b>
		Amend Public Facility Fees Ordinance (Title 18) to allow builders to defer payment of impact fees.	<b>Completed on August 21, 2018</b>

The Board and staff are to be complemented for engaging in a comprehensive strategic approach given the failure of existing policies, as demonstrated in the tables below. However, missing from the project list is the idea of rejecting the 45-year anti-suburban fetish of professional planners, academics and progressive politicians. San Luis Obispo County contains over 3000 sq. miles, of which only about 4% are urbanized or urbanizable under current County and city land use plans and regulations. To deal with this, stack-and-pack, anti-automobile, and forced mass transit have been adopted as policy. Of course this policy package has been undergirded and propagandized by climatists promoting the global warming theory. As the various enviro-socialists at the state and national level have made crystal clear, this is really a ploy to adopt socialism and to oppress the average American.

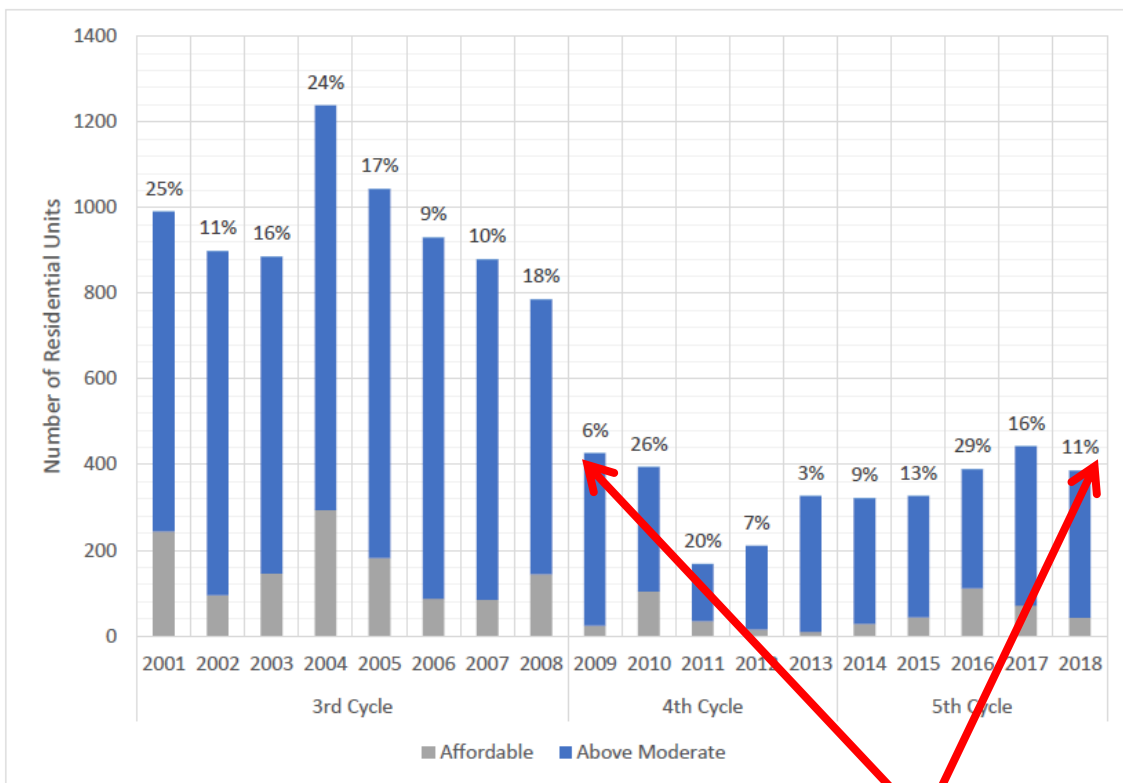
The details of the debt issuance and tax hike option are presented in item 21 below.

The Board needed to ask staff where the assignment stands related to the suburban footprint expansion. Unfortunately there was no discussion of this issue. Perhaps the Board majority is being snookered on this important policy matter.

Remember, this issue is critical to the agreement to continue the housing-in-lieu tax temporarily until this whole project is fully evolved. Any shillyshallying on this one would break the deal.

**Figure 3**, below, demonstrates the failure of this overall policy over the past decade.

Figure 3: Percentage of Residential Units Deemed Affordable



**The graph certainly points to a failure of housing policy for a decade.**

The County’s Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requires that about 10,800 new homes (of all types – apartments, condos, free standing, mobile, etc.) be zoned in over the next 8 years. Under the law these do not actually have to be constructed, but the County and 7 cities must prove that they have the zoning available. SLOCOG’s jobs and population growth forecast indicates that about 40,000 new homes are needed between now and 2040. From the chart above, it can be seen that the average new homes of all types actually produced over the past 10 years is less than 400 per year. At 400 per year it would take 100 years on until 2120 produce 40,000 new homes.

Also, as displayed in the chart, the number of “affordable homes” is miniscule.

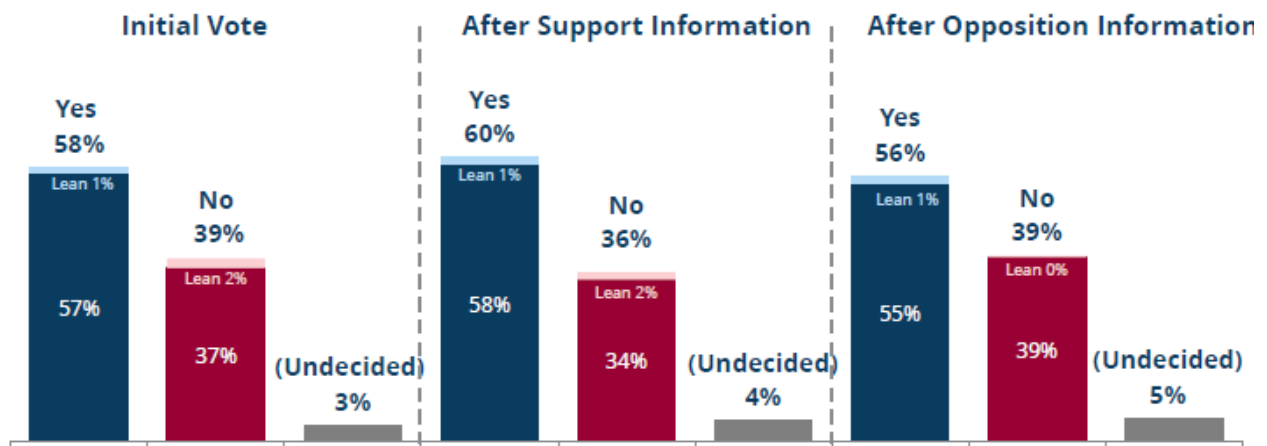
**Item 21 - Request to 1) receive an update on the feasibility study of a potential affordable housing bond ballot measure and a potential libraries bond ballot measure and 2) provide direction on pursuit of an affordable housing bond measure.** After substantial presentation and deliberation, the Board unanimously directed staff to prepare the details and documents for the

possible adoption of a debt issuance and tax hike. The final decision placing the matters on the November ballot will be made on June 16, 2020.

**Background:** This item was placed on the agenda by staff per prior Board direction. The issue last week was not necessarily to go forward but to determine if the staff should work up a bond and tax ordinance to be placed on the November general election ballot for voter consideration. As noted in the item title, in addition to a housing bond, a discussion of a potential library bond is also included. The County conducted an independent poll, and neither bond showed much potential of achieving a 2/3 vote, even after an “education” campaign.

## Affordable Housing Vote Progression

*Opposition information is impactful, and can decrease support for an affordable housing measure.*



### Background on potential housing bond

- \$40-M affordable housing bond
- Estimated cost of \$3.85 per \$100-K assessed value per year over a 20-year debt term
- Countywide, including 7 cities and unincorporated areas
- Requires 2/3 registered voters approval
- 7/16/2019 – Board directed staff to study the feasibility for placing a housing bond on November 2020 ballot

For a home assessed at \$650,000, the new tax would be \$25.03 per year. For the Diablo Nuclear Power Plant, it would have been per \$99,265 if it were not shutting down.



*To provide first-time homebuyer assistance and affordable housing throughout San-Luis-Obispo-County for working people/families and vulnerable populations including veterans, seniors, persons with disabilities, domestic abuse victims, and those who are at risk of becoming homeless; and transition homeless individuals into housing, shall the measure issuing \$40,000,000 in bonds at legal rates, at an estimated \$3.85 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, raising approximately \$2,772,891 annually while bonds are outstanding, and requiring local oversight and audits be adopted?*

The slug to the left indicates that some of the bond funding would be used for homebuyer assistance. This is a terrible idea. The County should not get into the business of subsidizing home ownership. Who would get the new homes? Would there be a lottery or what? If this plan were to go forward, the proceeds should be used to help finance low income and workforce family rental apartment projects.

The Bond interest would be around \$1.2 million per year on top of the \$40 million principal, which would have to be paid back, which is why the \$40 million issue yields only \$2.8 million per year. The

County should be able to find this in its \$549 million general fund budget and not resort to debt and tax increases. For example, it creams off millions each year in salary under runs (not all general fund) to pay for unbudgeted salary and benefit increases. It then increases staffing as well. At the same time it takes no affirmative stand with regard to maintaining Diablo open, promoting natural resources such oil and gas, promoting 5-star destination resorts, and promoting high-end estate and ranchette development, all of which cost little in government services but pay high property taxes and in some cases high sales taxes and hotel taxes.

Why is the answer always to go to a new tax? The County already is already receiving or projecting housing revenue from Federal and State programs and plans to use some of its Diablo mitigation funding for housing (this is a onetime shot).

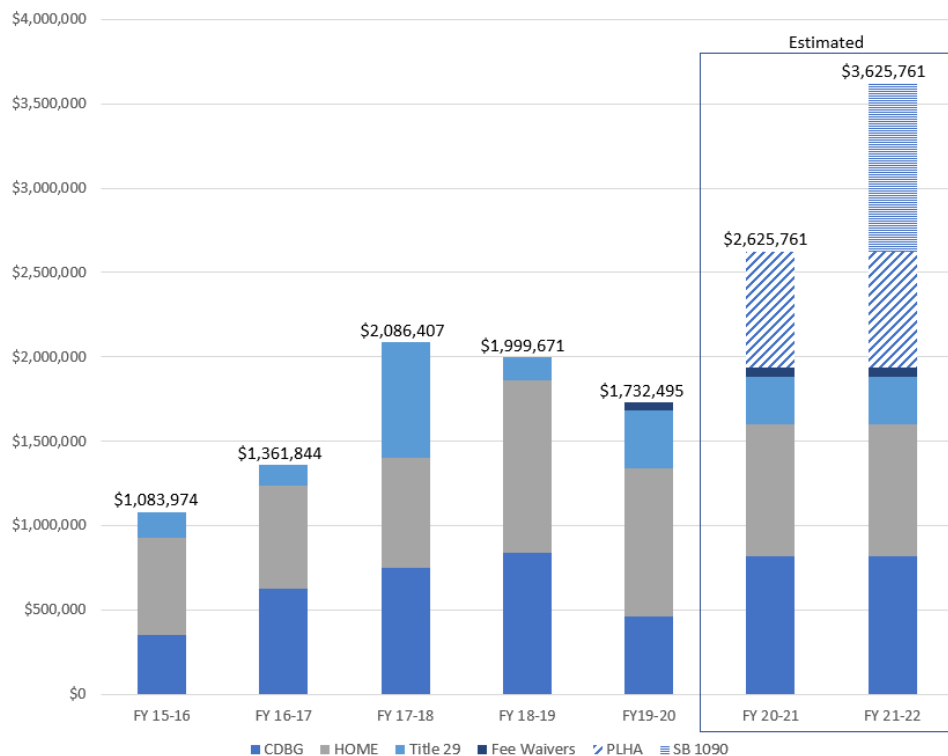
If the Board does direct the preparation of a bond program, a group would be created to “educate” the public on the benefits. This is a tricky process in which government employees and rent seeking community partners develop an advertising campaign, which is supposed to be “informational” since it could be using government funds. The FPPC is currently investigating SLOCOG for violations in this regard.

The write-up states in part that if the Board does authorize the preparation of the item for the ballot, staff and the partners will prepare a plan for the use of the funds. You would think that everyone would want to know the content of the program before placing the bond issue on the ballot.

*Prior to placing a potential housing bond on the ballot, if directed to do so, the Planning and Building Department would conduct community and stakeholder meetings to educate the public about the affordable housing bond, describe the types of projects and programs that could be funded with bond proceeds, and determine highest priority housing and homelessness needs. The Planning and Building Department would also work with city partners and stakeholders to develop a conceptual plan for administering bond proceeds. The plan would address the process for reviewing funding proposals, developing funding recommendations, and monitoring and reporting on funding results.*

Governments always leap to solutions without adequately defining the problem that they are attempting to solve. Some relevant questions which should be answered before leaping to this solution include:

1. What is the scope of the housing problem in SLO County?
2. How big is it and what are the barriers to solving it?
3. What portion of the problem will this program solve? For example, how many and what type of housing units and for whom would be generated over the life of the program? How does this compare with the overall need? Per the chart below, the County already spends and expects to spend several million per year on housing.
4. How many units will be leveraged when this program is adopted and when it is matched with Federal, State, not-for-profit, and for-profit resources? What is the general potential leverage?
5. Is the issuance of debt backed by a property tax hike justified by the projected results?



**Item 22 - Executive Session.** It is not clear if a discussion of Supervisor Hill’s alleged vile and bullying comments was included in this session. As of the day after the Board meeting, the matter has been over washed by the emergence of an FBI investigation, which seems to have focused on Supervisor Hill. There are various theories in the news media, accompanied by widespread public

speculation, about the subjects of the FBI investigation and how they might be related to the alleged drug overdose which threatened Supervisor Hill's life.

**Item 23 - Hearing to consider tentative approval of amendments to Title 22 and Title 23 of the County Code, Framework for Planning, Coastal Framework for Planning, Inland Area Plans, and the Conservation and Open Space Element (LRP2013-00017) to modify combining designations for lands with significant mineral resources and lands adjacent to existing mines and quarries pursuant to the State Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.** The Board approved revisions of the ordinances which pertain to gravel operations and other mining. These have been recommended by staff and the Planning Commission. The zoning classifications related to mining are mandated by State law in an effort to prevent the counties and cities from allowing development on or near major mineral deposits. The idea is to not allow incompatible development. The State understands that extracting minerals such as gravel for roads is of very high strategic importance.

In reading the Plan goals below, the question arises: Is the County really trying to protect mining and its impact on the economy and the need for vital materials? Check out some of the wording highlighted in yellow below:

Principle 1: *Preserve open space, scenic natural beauty and natural resources. Conserve energy resources. Protect agricultural land and resources.*

Principle 2: *Strengthen and direct development toward existing and strategically planned communities.*

This one actually sounds like an effort to use the mining ordinance to promote stack- and- pack

Coastal Zone

Goal 1: *Preserve open space, scenic natural beauty and natural resources. Conserve energy resources. Protect agricultural land and resources.*

Goal 8: *Strengthen and direct development toward existing and strategically planned communities.*

The proposed amendments Ditto would support and be consistent with the principles and goals. Framework for Planning establishes two combining designations for the protection of mineral resources. These are EX (Energy and Extractive Area) and EX1 (Extractive Resource Area). EX applies to regional energy facilities, large scale mining operations, and mineral resources of statewide significance. EX1 applies to minerals resources of regional significance. Ordinance requirements for non-mineral development differ between the two designations. The proposed amendments would clarify the distinction between the two combining designations and introduce a third designations.

Economic Element

The following goals are relevant to the proposed Mineral Resources Designation Amendments:

□ Goal EE1: *Promote a strong and viable local economy by pursuing policies that balance economic, environmental, and social needs of the county.*

What does balance mean? Good jobs in mining and trucking would benefit social needs.

□ Goal EE 2: *Retain and enhance a diverse economy.*

□ Goal EE 3: *Provide for strategically-located opportunities for economic development.*

*The proposed amendments would support and be consistent with the goals stated in the Economic Element and State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) “Mineral Resource Management Policies” for any lands that are designated as containing significant mineral resources. The proposed amendments*

*are designed to ensure that sand and gravel resources are available to meet the needs of the construction industry, while forecasting demand. Conservation and Open Space Element*

What are some examples – a quarry, trucking facility, asphalt plant, or what?

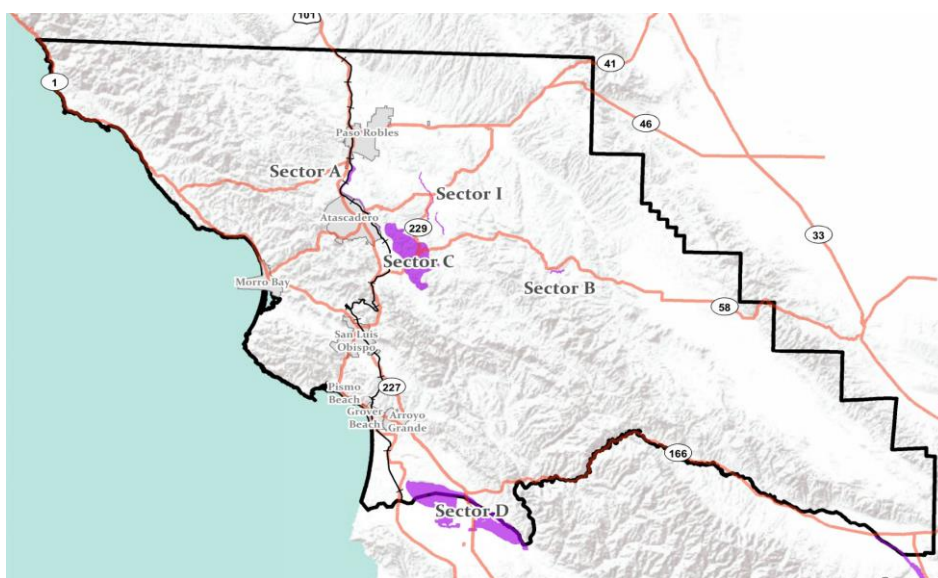
The following goals are relevant to the proposed Mineral Resources Designation Amendments:

□ Goal MN 1: *Conservation and development of significant mineral deposits will be a high priority, but will be balanced with other County General Plan goals and policies.*

□ Goal MN 2: *Significant mineral resources will be protected from land uses that threaten their availability for future mining.*

□ Goal MN 3: *Balance mining of mineral resources with sensitive natural resources and existing adjacent property.*

The concerns did not emerge in the meeting and the matter was dealt with quickly.



## Summary of Proposed Changes

Existing	Proposed	Permitting Reqs.	Prohibited Uses
<b>EX-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing energy or mineral extraction</li> </ul>	<b>EX –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include existing mines and quarries, and</li> <li>Remove previously mapped defunct energy facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MUP or CUP for resource generating facilities</li> <li>MUP for all other land uses</li> <li>Exceptions for existing single-family residences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycling &amp; Scrap</li> <li>Small Scale Manufacturing</li> <li>Clubs, Lodges, and Private Meeting Halls</li> <li>Libraries &amp; Museums</li> <li>Churches</li> <li>Rural Rec. &amp; Camping (except Incidental Camping)</li> <li>Schools</li> <li>Restaurants</li> <li>Lodging (except B&amp;B Inns, 3 or fewer units)</li> <li>Waste Disposal Sites</li> <li>Airfield &amp; Landing Strips</li> </ul>
<b>EX1-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lands that contain minerals of regional significance</li> </ul>	<b>MRA –</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formerly EX-1 will be renamed to MRA and still only include lands that contain minerals of regional significance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Subs. - min. parcel size of 10 acres</li> <li>Mineral or petroleum extraction uses require a land use permit</li> <li>All other uses that require a permit shall not adversely affect mineral extraction potential</li> </ul>	
<b>MDZ -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This new designation will be applied to areas within 1/4 mile of active mines to serve as a constructive notice for nearby mining activity.</li> <li>No standards are proposed for MDZ areas</li> </ul>		N/A	N/A

### Planning Commission Meeting of Thursday, March 12, 2020 (Completed)

**Item 6 - Hearing to consider a request by California Production Services for a Conditional Use Permit DRC2019-00180 (Formerly Guitierrez Minor Use Permit DRC2018-00103) to allow 2,000 square feet of indoor cannabis cultivation, two acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation, and 3,000 square feet of ancillary cannabis processing activities. The project will result in the disturbance of approximately 2.7 acres on a 20.13-acre parcel. The project site is within the Agriculture land use category located at 1480 Penman Springs Road, approximately 1.48 miles east of the City of Paso Robles. The Commission denied the application on a 2/1 vote with Campbell and Brown voting for denial and Multari advocating for a continuance. Commissioner Legg was absent and the 4<sup>th</sup> District seat is vacant. Commissioners were concerned about the lack of a real plan to secure water offsets as required by the Paso Basin water moratorium. A number of residents spoke in opposition while others supported the project.**

There was considerable testimony that the CEQA negative declaration was a mistake and that the project should be subjected to a full EIR. Neighbors referred to comments from the State Wildlife Department, which pointed out that a number of listed and/or endangered species inhabit the area.

It appears that the County will be stiffening up on cannabis approvals. It is possible that the project will be appealed to the Board of Supervisors.

The staff had recommended approval of the permit.

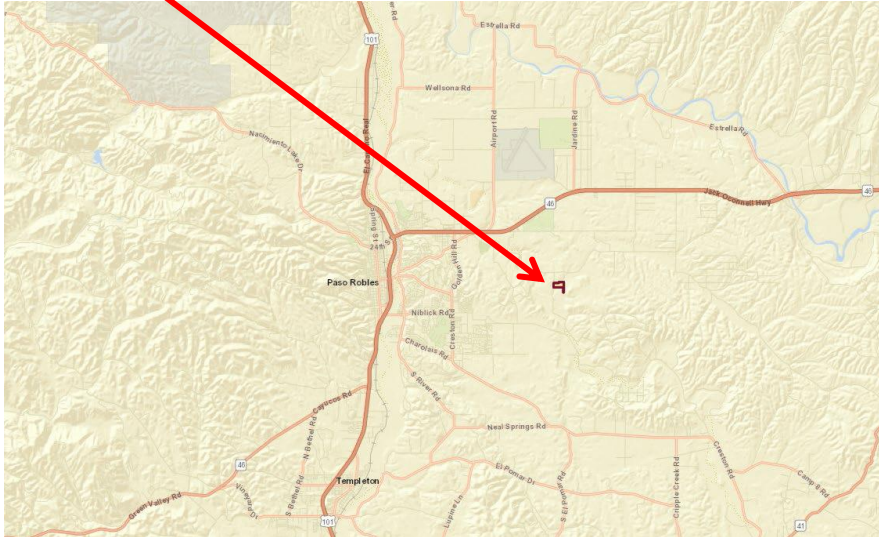
#### **Summary**

*The applicant proposes to establish up to 22,000 square feet of indoor cannabis cultivation (greenhouse) and up to two acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation. Project development would include eight greenhouses totaling 22,000 square feet, 87,120 total square feet of hoop structures, and a 3,000 square foot steel building for processing activities ancillary to cannabis cultivation (drying, trimming, packaging, and labeling). An existing outdoor cannabis cultivation had been on site and was registered as Cooperative/Collective registration CCM2016-00394 under Urgency*

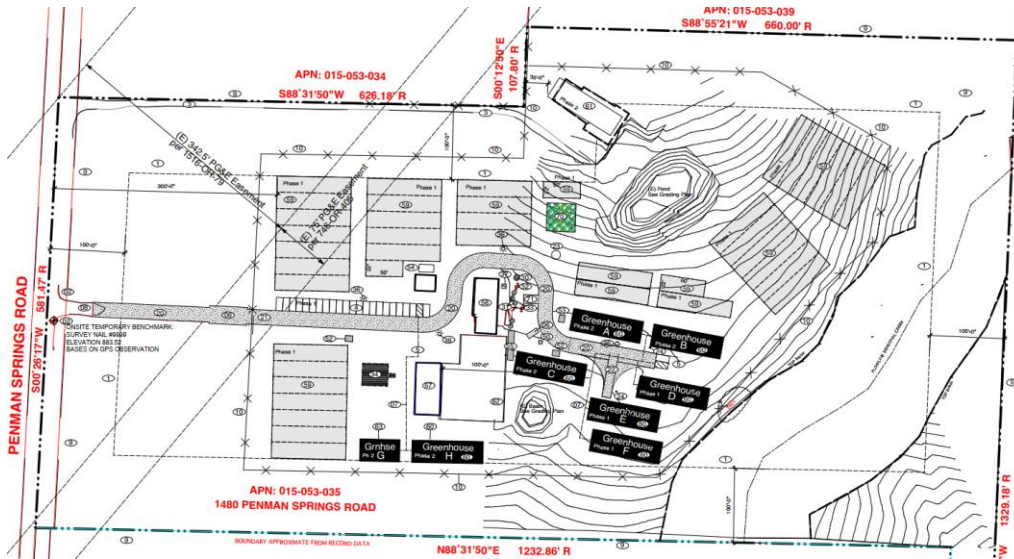


Ordinance 3334. The operation consisted of one acre of disturbed area with a total canopy of less than one acre. The operation did not have a valid State license and the cannabis was recently removed due to the code violation. The project was elevated from a Minor Use Permit to a Conditional Use Permit as required by County Land Use Ordinance (LUO) Section 22.40.040. Other existing development on site includes two single-family residences (one to remain and one to be demolished) and a barn.

**Site**



**Layout**



# 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

## CALIFORNIA IS A CRUEL MEDIEVAL STATE

*The Golden State has become a cruel and unusual place because callousness and narcissism were redefined as caring and compassion.*

**By Victor Davis Hanson**

One way of understanding California is simply to invert traditional morality. What for centuries would be considered selfish, callous, and greedy is now recalibrated as caring, empathetic, and generous. The current ethos of evaluating someone by his or her superficial appearance—gender or race—has returned to the premodern values of 19th-century California when race and gender calibrated careers. We don't pay medieval priests for indulgences of our past and ongoing sin, but we do tweet out displays of our goodness as the penance price of acting amoral.

A paradox ensures that Californians both have a high, indeed smug, view of themselves and yet do a lot of damage to their fellow human beings. Their haughtiness is based largely on the reality that Silicon Valley, sandwiched between Stanford University and University of California, Berkeley, became the birthplace of the global computer, internet, social media, and a high-tech revolution. For progressives who deprecate the capitalist lifestyle, having a lot of money still allows one to say one thing and live out the opposite.

The state's multi-trillion-dollar companies have hired tens of thousands of seven-figure, mid-level executives and computer experts who assume that life in the California coastal corridor is a birthright paradise.

The resulting tax revenue bonanza to the state allows one-party-rule to rid California of the old bothersome Reagan-Deukmejian-Wilson working- and middle-classes by embracing not-in-my-backyard zoning, identity politics, anal-retentive regulations, steep tax rates, utopian green agendas, open borders, and decriminalization of things that used to be felony offenses.

Indeed, the bigger and wealthier California became, the more the rich sought to privatize their lives and to give up on public services, the more the middle classes left the state, the more the poor from Mexico and Latin America crossed the southern border illegally, the more its schools deteriorated,

and the more its infrastructure ossified and became decrepit, from century-old power transmission towers to pot-holed and jammed highways.

The resulting medieval society is now one of a few thousand millionaires and millions of lower-middle-class wage earners as well as millions of abject peasants and poor serfs. Those on the bottom receive relatively generous subsidies to just get by. Over a quarter of the state's population was not born in the United States. A fifth lives below the poverty line. One-third of welfare recipients in the United States live in California. These are statistics of which our moralists in Malibu or Mill Valley either are ignorant, or simply shrug that they don't care.

In a paradoxical way, California would have to become much more impoverished than it is now to seem a far worse abode than the birthplace of most of its current immigrants from southern Mexico, Central America, China, and Southeast Asia. That is, while the middle class has been leaving in droves, given the abject decline of their beloved native state, the even poorer newcomers have a quite different benchmark of comparison. Compared, to say, Oaxaca, or rural China, California's is rich, free, and eager to subsidize even illegal arrivals.

### **Out of Sight, Out of Mind**

The coastal rich and professional classes make so much that they are willing to put up with the state's high taxes and poor services on three assumed premises.

First, state redistribution of some of their vast incomes doesn't hurt all that much, while offering atheists, agnostics, and secularists generous medieval penance and *fides* as true-blue progressives. As long as the coastal tech economy, financial services, entertainment, tourism, and blue-chip research universities keep booming, the state within a state doesn't worry about the funding-to-benefit relationship between soaring California taxes and commensurately declining public services.

Second, the coastal enclaves have enough money to navigate around the ramifications of their own ideology, whether by avoiding much of the state's interior, putting their kids in private schools, living in tony gated communities, buying concierge private healthcare, and ensuring that the Other, who daily ventures into their neighborhoods to do domestic and outdoor chores, leaves by nightfall. Buying a Range Rover or Mercedes SUV or even a Gulfstream is a good way to ease the burden of fighting climate change, just as one's concierge doctor can galvanize his support for Medicare for All.

Third, our blessed lords and earls envision California not as a single state. Indeed, most coastal dwellers have never visited the small towns of the Central Valley or the Sierra foothills or the northern third of the state. Instead, they see these areas the way Manhattanites look at Rochester, or Chicago looks at southern Illinois. In their view, freakish 19th-century mapping created California, and so they have no concern what Outer Californians think of the way they govern the state.

The result is abject cruelty. How can state leaders impose the highest gasoline taxes in the country, and then allow sections of their main longitudinal freeways—large swaths of the 99, the central coastal 101, or most of the West Side I-5—to become gory 4-lane motorized gladiatorial arenas?

As traffic quadrupled over the last half-century, the state's freeways necessary to drive across California remained calcified. And the result was that lots of people simply died, and that calculation was always baked into California governance as tolerable. By that, I mean, our masters of the universe couldn't care less that the 99 "freeway" has become, by most metrics, the most lethal major thoroughfare in the United States. Out of sight, out of mind.

### **"Winners" and "Losers"**

Much of the state is a natural desert—ironically in some of the toniest places where the rich dwell, from Montecito to Carmel.

Yet no major reservoir has been built in nearly 40 years, a period during which the population doubled. No doubt, 19th-century California was a paradise—Hetch Hetchy undammed, the lush delta flooding over millions of acres, upstream salmon fighting the San Joaquin River white water from the Bay to the Sierra Nevada.

But such fantasies are no way to run a 21st-century state with open borders, 40 million people, and a population that to survive and eat needs daily vast transfers of irrigation and municipal water from the wet north and east to the parched center and west.

Releasing to the sea millions of acre-feet of reservoir water or never allowing it to be banked in established manmade lakes means that millions of struggling rural residents drill new, multi-thousand-dollar domestic wells to survive, farmers idle land, and the poor lose jobs. The elite response is that there is no mental connection for them between what is sold at Whole Foods and what is grown outside of Bakersfield or Salinas. They muse why do such exploiters of nature have to drain our state's aquifer? And they assume that while Hetch Hetchy and the Owens Valley are critical to bring the anointed water, all other such huge water transfer projects should become negotiable.

One of the strangest sights in California is the horde of trailers, ratty cars, and dilapidated Winnebagos parked throughout moralistic Menlo Park, Palo Alto, and Sunnyvale, juxtaposed with gleaming high-tech corporate campuses. The most empathetic and caring people in the world, as they remind us hourly, turn out to be pretty callous about the "losers" in their midst who live in mobile and makeshift quarters on the street to keep Silicon Valley humming.

At least 19th-century company mining towns did not have the percentages of transients and homeless as does the richest, most caring landscape in the world. Those who can afford \$1,000-a-square-foot coastal cottages assume that the losers who can't code just couldn't cut it. If you insist on driving a semi, or welding tanks, and you are not willing to program, then why in the world should you dare imagine that you deserve to live within 50 miles of the California coast?

To walk in areas of downtown San Francisco, Los Angeles, Fresno, or Sacramento is to venture into the pages of Boccaccio or Dickens, as thousands defecate, inject, eat, drink, and urinate on the sidewalks. Should the coronavirus ever incubate there among California's hundreds of thousands on the street, the result would make the current nationwide caseload look like the common cold. Indeed, an epidemic among the tents and grocery carts of the state's main cities would become hideous and terrifying—and right out of the accounts of Thucydides or Procopius.

These ebbs and flows of homeless villages often lap up near the commuting corridors of the hyper-wealthy pedestrians and commuters. The former appeared bothered and so play the role of mounted knights that rode on by beggars outside the walls of the keep.

### **Truth and Consequences**

In California's upside-down morality, what is ethical is allowing thousands to live in fetid filth and to endanger their own health and that of an entire city, or waving in millions of foreign nationals without health audits, background checks, or legal permission. The Silicon Valley moralist at coffee seethes that Trump "put people in cages," while in private is relieved that there are not caravans of tens of thousands headed his way from Central America—in the age of the coronavirus.

What is now considered unethical would be either to provide planned suburban or rural homeless campuses with sanitation, clean food, and dormitory shelters, or to ask illegal immigrants in their home countries first to apply for U.S. residence through legal channels, to undergo legal, health, and job audits, and in the interval to learn English and the customs and laws of their desired new home.

Instead, opening the southern border to millions of destitute Central Americans and southern Mexican nationals is proof of one's morality among the wealthy of La Jolla, Santa Barbara, Pacific Heights, and Sausalito—again at least in the abstract. Few of them venture to a Merced, Sanger, Madera, or Firebaugh school to see the impact of tens of thousands of immigrant youths, without English, money, or skills suddenly overwhelming local school districts.

Fewer experience the effects on driving and law enforcement when millions of foreign immigrants navigate without prior experience of U.S. traffic laws, and without licenses, insurance, and registration.

No moralist seems to worry that tens of thousands of Americans, among them Mexican-American citizens in particular, depend on access to state and federal dialysis centers and hospital emergency rooms, many of which are now overwhelmed with non-citizen new patients.

To write the above is proof of one's callousness, to be its architect evidence of one's caring.

So those who craft sanctuary cities never venture into the Reedley emergency room, or know what a rural Tulare County sheriff encounters on a Saturday night, or what it is like to drive late on a Saturday night on a rural road in Central California, or would dare put their children in the Delano



public schools, or to live outside of Mendota with the house pump sputtering sand. Those who insisted on continuing with a money-draining, high-speed rail boondoggle rarely try to drive east on Highway 152 outside Gilroy and thereby learn the consequences of allowing roads to become Road Warrior death zones.

Those legislators and executives who dreamed up decriminalizing thefts under \$950 never worried about how the lost inventory of a family-owned store destroys middle-class aspirations. They certainly are careful about where not to shop, especially not where hordes of teens swarm and walk out each with mysteriously less than \$950 in loot.

California has become a cruel and unusual state because callousness and narcissism were redefined as caring and compassion.

*Victor Davis Hanson is an American military historian, columnist, former classics professor, and scholar of ancient warfare. He was a professor of classics at California State University, Fresno, and is currently the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He has been a visiting professor at Hillsdale College since 2004. Hanson was awarded the National Humanities Medal in 2007 by President George W. Bush. Hanson is also a farmer (growing raisin grapes on a family farm in Selma, California) and a critic of social trends related to farming and agrarianism. He is the author most recently of The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict was Fought and Won (Basic Books). This article first appeared in American Greatness on March 8, 2020.*

## **SUSTAINABLE DECADENCE 'THE DECADENT SOCIETY'**

**BY ANDREW J. BACEVICH**



I read [\*The Decadent Society\*](#) while on a weeklong cruise from Miami to Miami, stopping at various sun-bleached points in between. Future historians may well classify such voyages back to the place

where you first embarked as the very embodiment of early twenty-first-century bourgeois decadence, with food and drink, entertainment and diversions, all available in seemingly endless supply. With chapter titles such as “Sclerosis,” “Sterility,” “Repetition,” “Comfortably Numb,” and “Kindly Despotism” (“*No jeans in the dining room after 6:00 p.m., please.*”), Ross Douthat’s new book, *The Decadent Society*, seemed particularly apt as I considered whether or not to make another pass through the buffet line before heading to the bar for the extended happy hour.

It is not my intention to have fun at Douthat’s expense, however. He is, in my judgment, the only *New York Times* columnist regularly worth reading—this due in no small part to his sturdy refusal to succumb to Trump Derangement Syndrome. Indeed, his new book pays refreshingly little attention to our forty-fifth president. Donald R. Trump is “fundamentally more farcical than threatening,” he writes, a point with which I heartily agree.

*The Decadent Society* offers a fresh take on an old subject: the decline of Western civilization, with the United States leading the pack. Douthat writes from the perspective of a Catholic conservative Gen Xer at the top of his game. To this semi-senescent Catholic conservative Boomer, the resulting critique is original, insightful, and largely persuasive.

Decadence, as Douthat uses the term, consists of “economic stagnation, institutional decay, and cultural and intellectual exhaustion” combined with “a high level of material prosperity and technological development”—not bad as a broad description of our current situation. A vibrant society, Douthat believes, creates, discovers, and expands. Until well past the midpoint of the twentieth century, the West generally and the United States specifically exhibited these qualities. Around the time my fellow Boomers reached maturity, however, anomie and stasis set in, with the results now everywhere evident. “Resignation haunts our present civilization,” Douthat writes, with “therapeutic philosophies and technologies of simulation” having displaced passion, conviction, and faith. Overstated? Perhaps, but not wrong.

Yet apart from cruise ships that cater to a mostly white clientele searching for an escape from terminal malaise, what is the evidence of decadence? Douthat cites several factors, but I found most interesting his reflection on the declining birthrate in the United States and throughout most of the developed world. “Below-replacement fertility,” he writes, “is the fundamental fact of civilized life in the early twenty-first century.” It is also “an inevitable corollary of liberal capitalist modernity,” welcomed in some quarters as a predicate to personal liberation, especially for women, and as necessary to counter the threat of global overpopulation.

Aging societies, according to Douthat, tend to be risk-averse and are therefore less dynamic and less creative.

But for Douthat “the empty cradle” fosters a host of problems. Just a half-century ago, it was more or less taken for granted that building a traditional family was the foundation for living a fruitful life. Today, it is one option among many. Family is whatever I say it is. The same goes for you. And you can change your mind whenever it suits you. This describes the freedom that decadence allows.

Yet among the consequences, Douthat writes, “men and women seem to be having more and more trouble successfully and permanently pairing off.” Today sex itself may be falling out of favor, with

information technology offering “virtual alternatives to old-fashioned copulation.” As families become smaller, discretionary, and disposable—a trend that Douthat calls “postfamilialism”—loneliness and alienation increase. The relationship, he insists, is causal.

Furthermore, as birthrates fall, average age goes up. Aging societies, according to Douthat, tend to be risk-averse and are therefore less dynamic and less creative. While immigration can offset these effects, it comes with its own complications, contributing to the sort of racial, ethnic, and class divisiveness so much in evidence today in the United States and in many other parts of the West.

Douthat is not suggesting that returning to the days of Ozzie and Harriet (who, after all, had only two children) will cure all of society’s ills. Nor is his critique confined to issues related to family. He dissects in detail the “consistent ineffectuality in American governance,” the ideological polarization of the two main political parties (“the most decadent part of a decadent system”), Hollywood’s preference for formulaic blockbusters and remakes of whatever sold two decades ago, the reliance on drugs to tranquilize untroubled youngsters, the onset of pervasive “religious torpor,” the rise of the surveillance state, the anti-democratic impact of an arrogant and insular meritocracy, and the myriad insidious effects of advanced technology clogging our daily lives like a particularly virulent form of kudzu.

A skeptical reader might charge that Douthat sometimes presses his argument a bit further than his evidence will support. I myself tend to think that he gives short shrift to the medical advances that are transforming health care in America. (No more Ozzie and Harriet –era dentistry for me, thank you.)

Is a decadent America in danger of coming apart at the seams? Read *Times* commentators other than Douthat and you might think so, especially if, God forbid, you-know-who should win reelection come November. Douthat himself rejects any such dire forecasts, arguing that in the United States today “drugs and suicide are far more serious temptations than political radicalism and revolutionary violence.” I think he’s right. Whatever one may think of Bernie Sanders, he is no radical. And the constitutional order will survive even another four years of Trump.

As for decadence itself, Douthat speculates that it may prove to be remarkably sustainable. He envisions the United States and other Western nations being subjected to an “endless autumn.” Creativity, warmth, and hope will be in short supply, but there will be time to spare and, for some, money to burn. In his conclusion, Douthat proposes various antidotes to decadence, none of them especially persuasive. So cruise line CEOs take heart: business prospects appear bright—assuming, that is, that the coronavirus doesn’t sink us first!

[The Decadent Society:](#)

*How We Became the Victims of Our Own Success*

Ross Douthat

Avid Reader Press, \$27, 272 pp.

# CALIFORNIANS REJECT NEW TAXES AND BORROWING

BY EDWARD RING

<

The preliminary election returns reported on March 4th – the day after the election, and the day when we used to get *final* returns – indicate that California’s voters delivered a stunning rejection of new taxes and borrowing. It’s about time.



At the state level, Prop.13 which would have authorized \$15 billion in general obligation bonds for schools and colleges, required a simple majority for approval. But as of March 9th the “yes” votes only stood at 45.6 percent.

This is unprecedented. As [reported by Cal Matters](#), “since 1998 voters have passed five state school bonds, including a \$9 billion measure in 2016 that Gov. Jerry Brown opposed.”

While Prop. 13’s likely failure is surprising enough, the dismal fate of hundreds of local bond and tax proposals indicates a broader shift in California’s electorate. One state school bond may fail for various reasons, but that’s only one data point. On the other hand, California had 121 local school bonds on the March 3 ballot. The returns on March 4th had 86 of them falling short of the 55 percent threshold necessary for passage, nearly 70 percent. That’s a lot of data points.

Local taxes didn’t do much better. Of the 111 local tax measures proposed, voters as of March 4 were rejecting 65 of them, or nearly 60 percent. The table depicted below uses [data compiled by CalTax](#) as of March 4th. It shows that local school bonds, had all of them been accepted by voters, would have piled \$18.5 billion in debt onto California’s taxpayers, more than Prop. 13.

These preliminary March 2020 election results amount to a near inversion of tax and bond approval rates compared to previous elections in California. In [November 2018](#), [November 2016](#), and [November 2014](#), California’s voters were reliable supporters of local bond and tax measures. Across those three elections, voters approved local school bonds at a rate that always exceeded 80 percent, and they approved local taxes at a rate that was consistently at or close to 70 percent.

## Bonds are Taxes

The previously mentioned [Cal Matters article](#) suggested that voters may have confused the 2020 Prop. 13 school bond with the famous 1978 Prop. 13 which froze property taxes. “That presented an opening to philosophical opponents,” wrote author Ricardo Cano, “such as the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, which likened the measure to a tax increase.”

First of all, the fact that the 2020 Prop. 13 had the same number as the historic 1978 “Prop. 13” might have been misleading in both directions. After all, for several decades, opponents of new taxes in California have made the centerpiece of their agenda a desire to “protect Prop. 13.” Why wouldn’t low information voters with anti-tax inclinations simply vote yes on Prop. 13 to protect it? Of course, it could be that “low information voters with anti-tax inclinations” is an oxymoron. Fair enough. But the second half of Cano’s assertion is even more debatable.

The reason the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association “likened the measure [Prop. 13] to a tax increase” is because it *is* a tax increase. Refer again to the above chart and consider the row “additional taxes (30 years, 5 percent interest).” Based on March 4th election results, the annual payment on just the school bonds that passed, \$398 million per year, *exceeds* the projected annual collections on the local tax measures that passed, \$316 million. How is this not taxes? Who will make these payments of principle and interest?

### **Late Voters Change Outcomes**

As a result of California’s voters suddenly displaying a petulant reluctance to approve billions in new taxes and borrowing (also taxes), two things are certain. First, the recent measures enacted by California’s legislature to “improve turnout” and “ensure voting access” and “prevent vote suppression,” are about to bear fruit. Because a lot of these local tax and bond measures remain “too close to call.”

Back in the Pleistocene period (you know, the 20th century), California’s electorate suffered under the barbaric indignity wherein if you wanted to vote, you had to register at least six weeks ahead of time, and you voted on election day at a polling place unless you had a compelling reason to request an absentee ballot. This was based on the troglodytic assumption that people who cared enough to vote would make these simple arrangements. The problem, of course, is that responsible citizens who are capable of making these simple arrangements don’t reliably vote the way California’s unionized government bureaucrats want them to vote. As California’s unionized government tightened the screws on everyone who works for a living, responsible citizens have become increasingly disgruntled.

For this reason, California’s legislature, which for all practical purposes is under the absolute control of these unions, realized something had to be done if their insatiable desire for more money could be realized. They took it upon themselves to permit voting by ballots that are mailed anytime up until midnight on election day. They enlisted the support of that paragon of efficiency and probity, California’s Dept. of Motor Vehicles, to automatically register licensed drivers – only if eligible, *of course* – as voters. They implemented same day registration and voting, so they could canvas neighborhoods and campuses right up until and during election day to register voters and enable them to vote. They even legalized “ballot harvesting,” so they could go door to door and collect ballots from lazy voters who hadn’t yet voted, and deliver those ballots to a polling place for them.



Housebroken pundits do acknowledge the impact of these laws, but are too potty trained to acknowledge the negative consequences. As if the fact that legalizing these practices, and, presumably, eliminating any possible fraud that is invited by these practices, results in nothing that might be legitimately questioned. “Conservatives tend to vote early,” they’ll say, and that’s supposed to be the end of it.

The more accurate way to describe what’s now happening goes as follows: “Responsible people who bother to register to vote and turn up at a polling place on election day are also the people who pay taxes, and irresponsible people who have to be herded into casting a vote by a unionized government operative tend to be the people who do not pay taxes.” Or put another way, “early voters pay taxes, and late voters receive taxpayer funded entitlements.”

So put away the crystal ball, because everyone knows what is going to happen. Of the 38 local school bond measures that were reported as approved on March 4, there were 14, totaling \$2.3 billion, that were only ahead by 3 percentage points or less. How many of those might one expect to eventually fail once all the votes are counted? *Zero*. Conversely, of the 86 local school bond measures that were reported as rejected as of March 4, there were also 14, totaling \$1.6 billion, that were failing by 3 percentage points or less. How many of those might one expect to eventually succeed once all the votes are counted?

In the short run, Californians, thanks to efforts to goose the electorate in the name of “voter access,” may expect another billion or two in debt via school bonds, once final results are available and certified on April 10th – *38 days* after the election.

In the long run, California’s legislature is doing everything it can to remake its electorate into a reliably socialist voting bloc, as they deny the lessons of history.

The other thing that is certain as a result of California’s voters becoming less willing to cooperate with their ravenous government bureaucrats is that we can expect more local tax and bond proposals in November and from now on. Far more.

To understand why this is, consider King City Union School District, in Monterey County. Their voters on March 3 had two measures to consider. Measure A will approve a \$19 million bond to pay for “campus safety,” and alongside that is Measure B, which will also borrow \$19 million, to “modernize classrooms.” Perchance to make these classrooms safer? As of March 4th, both were too close to call. But double your measures, double your chances.

It is redundant to cite yet again the litany of failures logged by California’s state and local governments just in the past few years, much less the accumulating long train of abuses over the past few decades. But Californians of all ages, incomes, ethnicities and genders are awakening, and alas, it isn’t the compliant, manipulable, programmable “woke” that was planned for by California’s government unions and their plutocratic partners. The next few years should be very interesting indeed.

*This article originally appeared on the website of the California Globe.*

\* \* \*

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(Revised 2/2017)