



WEEKLY UPDATE JANUARY 3 - 9, 2021

THIS WEEK



BY RUBEN CUETO

SUPERVISOR REDISTRICTING PROCESS
ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS THEY DO EVERY 10 YEARS

STATE IGNORES COUNTY REQUESTS FOR RELIEF
FROM LA TYPE LOCKDOWNS

WHAT IS COUNTY PLAN AND SCHEDULE FOR VACCINATION?

FORMAL SWEARING IN OF NEW AND RE-ELECTED
SUPERVISORS – MONDAY, JANUARY 4TH

\$42 MILLION SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM
ARE THEY JUST RECYCLING THE HOMELESS?

3RD DISTRICT APPOINTMENT TO PLAN COMMISSION
KRISTINA SIMPSON-SPEARMAN – MILITARY AND FEMA EXPERIENCE - WAS
AIDE TO SENATOR DASCHLE

MORE COUNTY ENERGY BEING CONTRACTED OUT
OF STATE – DIABLO STILL CLOSING
& FLOATING FRENCH SOLAR PANELS NO LESS

SOME KAFOOZALING DEBT ISSUANCES

CODE ENFORCEMENT HEARING OFFICER PROPOSED

SLOCOG PROGRAMS ALMOST \$700 MILLION
ROAD MONEY FOR PENSION DEBT & THE SLO TROLLEY?

PAST WEEKS BEFORE THE RECESS

NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING FOR 3 WEEKS

**PLEASE SEE THE WEEKLY UPDATE FOR DECEMBER 20-26, 2020 FOR THE
REPORTS ON THE ISSUES BELOW**

[http://www.colabslo.org/prior_actions/2020/Weekly%20Update Dec-20 Dec-26 2020.pdf](http://www.colabslo.org/prior_actions/2020/Weekly%20Update%20Dec-20%20Dec-26%202020.pdf)

MANY ISSUES:

COVID INFECTION RATE UP

COUNTY MULLING LAW SUIT AGAINST GOVERNOR ON CLOSURES

**SUPPORT ASSEMBLYMAN CUNNINGHAM'S AB 108
(STOP GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY POWER ABUSE)**

**WHISTLE BLOWER FILES OFFICIAL COMPLAINT:
COUNTY PLANNER PROCESSED PERMIT FOR HER HUSBAND'S FIRM
(THE DEPARTMENT THEN LOWERED THE FEES)**

**CENTRAL COAST POWER BOTCHES OPT OUT FORM
(& DISCLOSES PERSONAL INFORMATION TO OUTSIDERS)**

**SLO TRIBUNE & PROGRESSIVE HIT MAN TOM FULKS ATTACK DA DAN
DOW, SHERIFF PARKINSON, AND ASSEMBLYMAN CUNNINGHAM
WHO ARE THEY PUSHING FOR THE NEXT ELECTION?**

COLAB IN DEPTH

SEE PAGE 23

ANDY CALDWELL

"THE SLO PSYCHIC" - 2021 PREDICTIONS

AN AGENDA TO REALIGN CALIFORNIA POLITICS

BY EDWARD RING

THE COALITION THAT WILL REALIGN CALIFORNIA

BY EDWARD RING

What's happening in California today is bigger than Newsom's failures as a governor

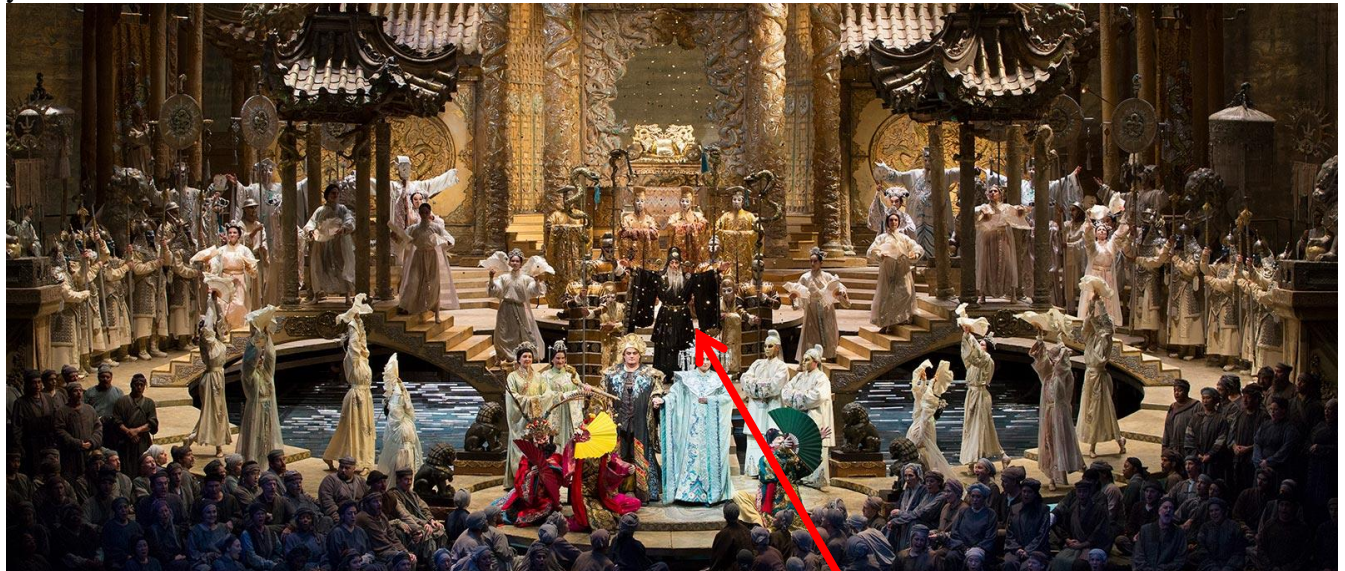
THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Ceremonial Board of Supervisors Meeting of Monday, January 4, 2021 (Scheduled) – 11:55 AM

Item 1 - Ceremonial Swearing in of elected and re-elected County Officials.

Supervisor Arnold will be sworn in for her 3rd full term. Supervisor Peschong will be sworn in for his 2nd full term. Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg will be sworn in for the balance of former Supervisor Hill's term – 2 years. There will be no general public comment for matters not on the agenda at this meeting. Public comment will be permitted only on **Item 2** below.

With the COVID lockdown in place, the Zoom version may not be so grand a ceremony as in past years.



Bruce Gibson as the Grand Vizier

Item 2 - Reorganization of the County Board of Supervisors: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the 2021 term. The write-up states:

¹ Graphic courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera – Turandot by Giacomo Puccini. Control Click here for a little cultural appropriation : <https://youtu.be/jVY5gs0K2Is>

In March 2020, District 3 Chairperson Adam Hill requested District 4 Vice-Chairperson Compton to step in and finish the 2020 calendar year as Chairperson. According to the Rotation approved in 2019 (see below) District 4 Supervisor should continue to be Chairperson in calendar year 2021, and District 2 Supervisor should continue to serve as Vice-Chairperson.

On January 7, 2019 the Board of Supervisors updated Section IV B of the Rules of Procedures to amend processes regarding electing the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Section IV B is referenced below:

“At the first regular meeting of the calendar year after the swearing-in ceremony, a Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected by majority vote of the Board and such Chair shall preside for one year. The process for nominating the Chair and Vice Chair shall be on a rotation basis. Beginning in 2019, the rotation shall be District 5, District 3, District 4, District 2, District 1; with the Chair for a subsequent year serving as Vice-Chair (e.g. 2019 Chair – District 5, 2019 Vice-Chair – District 3). Once completed, the District rotation will start again with District 5 (2024) and continue using the same sequence for Chair and Vice-Chair (District 5, 3, 4, 2,1). If the person nominated for Chair or Vice-Chair declines the nomination, she or he shall be rotated on the list. It is intended, but not mandated, that the Supervisor elected as Vice-Chair will succeed the Chair in the following year. In the absence or inability to attend by the Chair or Vice-Chair, a Chair protem shall be selected by the members present.”

Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, January 5, 2021 (Scheduled)

Item 11 - Request to appoint Kristina Simpson-Spearman as the District 3 representative to the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission. This one appears to be different from the usual coterie of neighborhood association types and codger retirees that typically fill local planning commissions. Planning staff had better get their act together and be ready to stand formation at 8:AM on the Court House lawn each morning. Note that some of the text of Spearman’s application form is garbled due to the County’s agenda software.

APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO A SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BOARD, COMMISSION, OR COMMITTEE

Date: 12/17/2020

Applying for appointment for District 3 Planning Commissioner Contact Information Name; Kristina Simpson-Spearman Supervisorial District: District 3 Years in Comity: Seven years Employment and Education Employment US Army: Platoon Leader and Executive Officer US Senate: State Communications Coordinator for Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD) Federal Emergency Management Agency: Senior Advisor to US Fire Administrator; Chief of Intergovernmental, Tribal and Community Relations to the FEMA Director; Director of External Affairs for NY, PR, USVI and PR for Department of Homeland Security.

High School Graduate or General Education Test passed? Yes

Education/Military Experience In terms of duration. Spearman has a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of South and a Master’s in Public Administration from American University. She was

selected by the Department of Homeland Security for the Key Senior Executive Service program, which she completed in 2005. Spearman was also accepted by and completed the National Preparedness Leadership Initiative in 2011, a joint program of the Harvard School of Public Health and Kennedy School of Government for Meta-Leadership training.

Spearman served in the US Army as a Platoon Leader and Executive Officer in Bosnia, Hungary, Croatia, Germany and the United States, earning the Meritorious Service Medal and Army Accommodation Medal for leadership and innovation.

Qualifications: Starting local public service career in 1992; for the next twenty years, Kristina Spearman was chosen to lead field, regional, headquarters and departmental level programs and incidents. She worked in the U. S. Senate, U. S. Army, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security.

Spearman has worked in a leadership position on over 40 declared disasters, emergencies, and National Security Special Events. As the Director of External Affairs in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands, she was the principal advisor on all external affairs issues; leading a 120-member External Affairs cadre and regional staff in the areas of legislative, intergovernmental, international, private sector and public affairs. She was chosen as the Senior Advisor to the United States Fire Administrator and served as the Chief of Intergovernmental, Tribal and Community Relations to the FEMA Director. Spearman represented FEMA when the Department of Homeland Security was created serving on the Secretary of Homeland Security's staff specializing in planning, policy and operations. There she developed the government's standard operating procedures for External Affairs during a federally declared incident, and was requested by the Department of Justice to assist with procedures to enhance disaster response activities. Based on her operational background, she led a comprehensive federal study on the Departmental Emergency Operation Centers for the Secretary's review.

Prior to joining FEMA, Spearman was the State Communications Coordinator for United States Senator TOM Daschle (D-SD), communicating issues and legislation to the public, media, state, local and tribal governments and other Federal partners and addressing constituent concerns on his behalf.

Please indicate why you would like to serve in this capacity: *I bring multiple attributes to this position. First, I recently developed a piece of property in Avila within the Coastal Commission jurisdiction to become our family home. This three year process of working with SLO COUNTY Planning and Building and going before the Planning Commission as a community member provided a unique insight into the process and effort required to accomplish the development of land and approval of a home in District 3. Second, I have advanced education and work experience in the planning :implementation of policy in government. Third, I have the skills to see different points of view and activate people together toward a common goal; along with the ability to understand complex issues and ; facilitate those issues in actionable language. These three key attributes combined with my desire to .. district are why I would like to serve in the position of District 3 Planning Commission.*



Wonder how badly they treated her?

“Lt.: GET THEM PLANNERS STRAC”

Item 22 - Request to: 1) approve an agreement (Clerk’s File) for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023 with the Department of Health Care Services in the total amount of \$41,938,524 to provide substance use disorder services under the Drug Medi-Cal Waiver Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS); and 2) delegate authority to the Health Agency Director or his designee to sign any future amendments to the agreement that do not affect the level of General Fund support required by the Health Agency. This item is cast as a formality required for the County to receive almost \$42 million in state Med-Cal reimbursements over a 3-year period for treating indigent people who suffer from substance abuse. Under State laws, the County must provide the services, and thus it must seek the reimbursements. The funding is a combination of State and Federal tax dollars.

The State sets a number of reporting standards for the County, which appear rigorous on the surface but omit to measure the most important results, such as how many people who go through the programs are able to get off drugs and alcohol, move to a lower level of treatment, get a job, and remain in permanent housing or anything else. Instead, all but one of the measures are input and activity measures of the program, not results. Thus neither the Feds, State, Board of Supervisors, nor taxpayers have any idea whether the program is worth one red cent. It might remove a few homeless people from the streets while they are in residential treatment, but how many end up back in the same old situation from which they started?

The goals are extensive but do not deal with outcomes.

1. *Residential Treatment services to all beneficiaries;*
2. *Case Management services to navigate the transitions between treatment levels and coordinate with supportive services such as housing, physical health care, and employment;*
3. *Recovery Support Services (RSS) to assist in the maintenance of long-term recovery after the treatment episode;*
4. *Additional Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) services;*
5. *Establishing a standardized assessment tool (ASAM criteria);*
6. *Financial reimbursement structure based upon costs set by the County (similar to Mental Health Medi-Cal);*
7. *Selective provider contracting and provider appeals process under the County jurisdiction;*
8. *Coordination of care and integration of services with managed care plans;*
9. *Authorization and Utilization Management (Quality Support) and*
10. *Expanded professional workforce to include Licensed Clinicians.*

Similarly the “performance measures” are all about input and activities, not outcomes.

Outpatient Treatment Expansion:

(1) Serve 1,546 new clients annually. COLAB NOTE: WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM? If they got better, how many new clients are out there in the population or are they just recycling them? An outcome measure would report data such as “of the 1,546 new clients, 501/32% will be clean and sober for at least 2 years after treatment.” Similarly all the goals and measures below should contain outcome success rates.

a. This result was met across all three Fiscal Years of the Agreement.

(2) Increase the current available walk-in access hours from 3 hours per week to 20 hours per week in Paso Robles.

a. From FY 2017-18 to FY 2018-19, the Health Agency was unable to meet the goal of increasing walk-in hours in Paso Robles from three hours per week to 20 hours per week due to office space constraints. However, the walk-in screening availability was increased from three hours to eight hours and was maintained at that level.

b. In FY 2019-20, the Health Agency was able to meet the intended result of increasing walk-in hours in Paso Robles from 3 to 20 hours per week due to telehealth. All the Assessment Coordinators can screen clients in any region, increasing Screening slots to Paso Robles citizens.

(3) Increase the number of outpatient treatment group hours from 20 hours per week to 100 per week in Paso Robles.

a. From FY 2017-18 to FY 2018-19, the Health Agency was unable to meet the goal of increasing group hours from 20 hours per week to 100 in Paso Robles due to office space constraints. However, the number of group hours in Paso Robles increased from 20 to 53 hours per week and was maintained at that level.

a. In FY 2019-20, the Health Agency was unable to meet the intended result of increasing group hours in Paso Robles from 20 to 100 hours per week due to continued limited clinic space and was further impacted and decreased by the COVID-19 physical distancing six-foot requirement.

(4) Increase access to clients living in the Paso Robles area by increasing treatment slots from 12 to 87.

a. From FY 2017-18 to FY 2018-19, the Health Agency the Health Agency was unable to meet the goal of increasing treatment slots from 12 to 87 clients in the Paso Robles area due to office space constraints. However, the number of treatment slots increased from 12 to 62 and was maintained at that level.

b. In FY 2019-20, the Health Agency met the goal of increasing treatment slots from 62 in the prior year to 132 treatment slots, which is over the intended result of 87. The number of treatment slots was improved due to the re-assignment of staffing to the Paso Robles clinic to meet the demand and was aided by the use of Zoom (telehealth) to provide services virtually so that space was not a limiting factor. Paso Robles was the only clinic which achieved a relatively stable client base during the COVID-19 time period.

(5) Seventy-five (75) youth and their families will be served through the South Street clinic.

a. This result was met across all three Fiscal Years of the Agreement.

Note: The existing office space in Paso Robles does not meet the additional space requirements necessary to fully implement the DMC-ODS plan. Behavioral Health secured a new facility in the Paso Robles area that will expand treatment capacity. The anticipated move in date is mid to late 2021 .

Withdrawal Management and Medication Assisted Treatment:

1. Maintain an average length of stay of 80 days in order to achieve stabilization of detoxification symptoms in clients. COLAB NOTE: SO WHAT? WHEN THEY GET OUT, DO THEY JUST GO BACK TO THE CREEK BED AND DRINK UNTIL THEY ARE PICKED UP AGAIN?

a. *This result was met across all three Fiscal Years of the Agreement.*

2. *The rate of re-admission to detoxification services within one year will be less than 10% COLAB NOTE: Here is an actual attempt at a performance measurement but it lacks the ordinate data of how many actual individuals comprise 10%, which in turn undermines any notion of how hard it is to get results. In other words, if 10% is equal to 5 individuals, it is probably pretty easy versus if it equals 500 individuals.*

a. *This result was met across all three Fiscal Years of the Agreement.*

Case Management and Recovery Support Services (RSS):

1. *The total of new clients served with case management services will be 480 individuals per year.*

a. *This result was met across all three Fiscal Years of the Agreement.*

2. *Increased average length of stay in treatment from 95 days to 150 days.*

a. *In FY 2017-18, the Health Agency partially met this result. The average length of stay in treatment was 132 days. This is an increase of 39% over the 95-day average from the original goal.*

b. *In FY 2018-19, the Health Agency partially met this result. The average length of stay in RSS was 133 days. This is an increase of 40% over the 95-day average from the original baseline, yet short of the intended result of 150 days.*

c. *In FY 2019-20, the Health Agency partially met this result. The average length of stay in RSS was 128 days. This is an increase of 35% over the 95-day average from the original baseline, yet short of the intended result of 150 days. The intended result of 150 days may not be achievable as that would be five months after the end of treatment that clients would still be involved. An intended result of 120 days seems more reasonable and was achieved in all past years' reporting. COLAB NOTE:*

MEASURES A, B, AND C ABOVE ARE INPUT MEASURES. THEY ARE GOING TO INCREASE THE DAYS OF HOSPITALIZATION, BUT HOW WILL THAT REDUCE/ IMPROVE RECOVERY? WHAT IS THE EFFICIENCY RATIO? HOW DOES THE TAXPAYER KNOW THE PROGRAM IS WORKING?

3. *Two hundred (200) clients will participate in the Recovery Support Services (RSS) per year.*

a. *In FY 2017-18, a total of 72 clients participated in RSS. However, it should be noted that the tracking of RSS did not occur until March 2018, coinciding with the full implementation of the DMC-ODS waiver on January 1, 2018.*

b. *In FY 2018-19, a total of 155 clients participated in RSS. Gains were made in implementing RSS.*

c. *In FY 2019-20, a total of 96 clients participated in RSS in FY 2019-20, which can be attributed to the impacts of COVID-19 on the decreased number of clients served, especially for stable clients.*

Behavioral Health's priority was to focus on very high-risk clients during COVID-19.

The funds received through the DHCS DMC-ODS Intergovernmental Agreement help Behavioral Health achieve its mission of promoting safe, healthy, responsible and informed choices concerning alcohol and other drugs through programs responsive to community needs. That mission contributes to efforts to achieve the desired County vision of both a "Healthy Community" and a "Safe Community".

This is yet another example of the failure of government to use real outcome measures to determine if programs actually work and are worth the money. The program might be administered efficiently, benefit the patients in the short run, provide the patients with caring professionals, and so forth. But does it work to solve the problem?

The overall agreement allocates a total of \$41,938,524 over the three-year period.

FY 2020-21	\$13,979,508
FY 2021-22	\$13,979,508
FY 2022-23	\$13,979,508
Total	\$41,398,524

Funding Amounts Included in DMC-ODS Intergovernmental Agreement

	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23
Non-Perinatal State General Funds	1,988,023	1,988,023	1,988,023
Perinatal State General Funds	149,636	149,636	149,636
Administrative Cost State General Funds	320,648	320,648	320,648
Total State General Funds	2,458,307	2,458,307	2,458,307

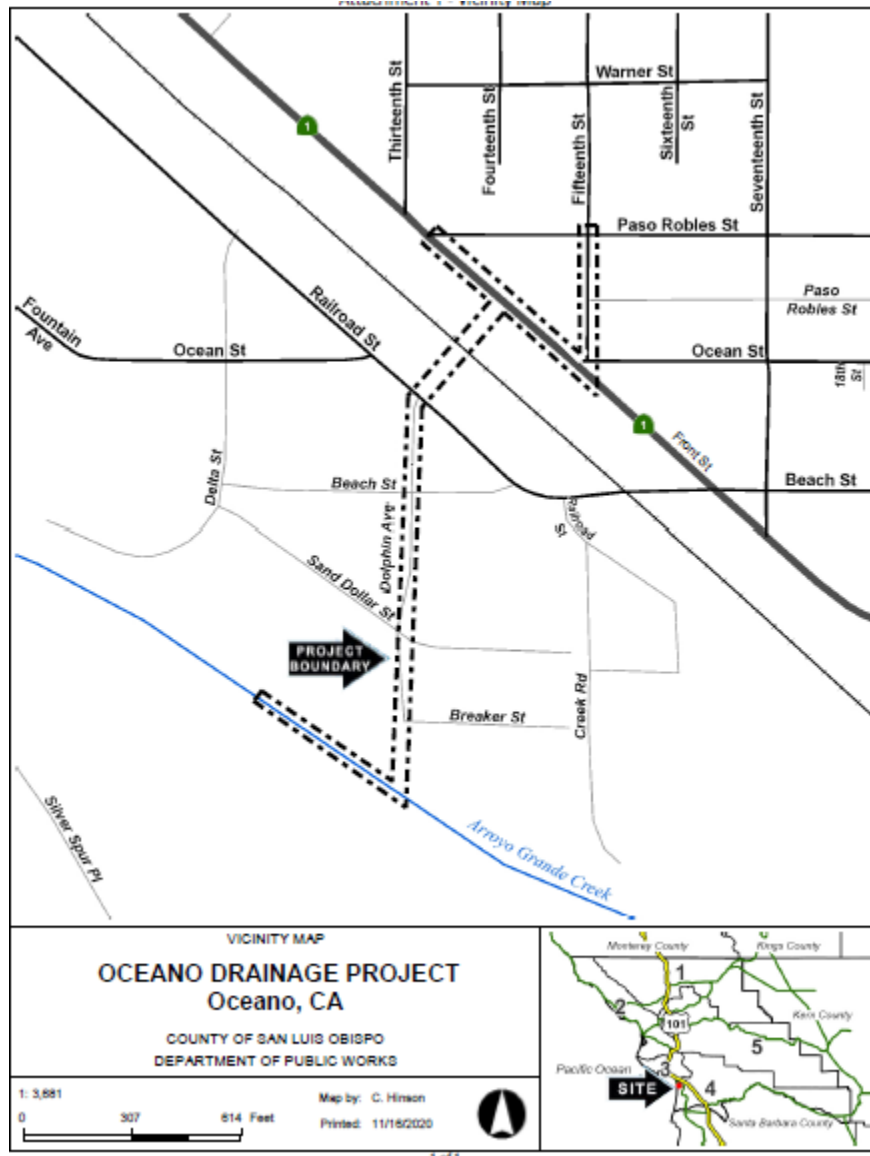
Non-Perinatal Federal Share	9,317,145	9,317,145	9,317,145
Perinatal Federal Share	701,291	701,291	701,291
Administrative Costs	1,502,765	1,502,765	1,502,765
Total Federal Funds	11,521,201	11,521,201	11,521,201
Grand Total	13,979,508	13,979,508	13,979,508

Non-Perinatal Federal Share	9,317,145	9,317,145	9,317,145
Perinatal Federal Share	701,291	701,291	701,291
Administrative Costs	1,502,765	1,502,765	1,502,765
Total Federal Funds	11,521,201	11,521,201	11,521,201
Grand Total	13,979,508	13,979,508	13,979,508

Items 26 and 27 - A Complicated Financing For the Oceano Drainage Project. The County will issue \$3 million in debt for a 30-year Federal Loan. The County took an internal loan from itself to finance the project which has been completed successfully. It will now pay that loan back and acquire a new loan from the US Department of Agriculture:

Construction of the Oceano Drainage Project was successfully completed June 1, 2020. By following the recommended actions stated above, the County will acquire a low-interest loan from the United States of America Acting Through Rural Utilities Service (USA-RUS), part of the United States

Department of Agriculture, to pay off existing interim financing from the Tax Reduction Reserve Fund and establish a reimbursement agreement with Caltrans for maintenance work within Caltrans right of way.



The full cost over the life of the loan for principle and interest seems to be \$4,301,590. It seems that for a lousy \$3 million, the County should simply grab some of its extensive reserves instead of issuing debt. The explanation of the loan is a little murky.

The County has secured approval for a USA-RUS loan in an amount up to \$3,000,000. The Public Facilities Corporation, by and through the Auditor-Controller acting as Trustee, will act as the intermediary between the County and the USA-RUS that purchases the COPs. The Corporation then receives installment payments from the County and uses the proceeds to pay principal and interest on the certificates. Annual payments, which include the debt service requirement, are expected to average \$115,408 per year for the first 10 years and \$104,917 for 30 years at an estimated interest

rate of 1.75%. The final interest rate will be the lower of 3.125% per annum or the interest rate in effect at the time of closing, which is estimated to be at 1.75%,

Item 31 - Floating Solar Solutions at the Los Osos Sewage Treatment Plant. The staff proposes that the County should enter into a long-term lease with a private vendor for the production of solar energy, which would offset a portion of the electrical energy costs at the Plant. The solar panels would actually be floating on about 1.6 acres of the Plant’s recycled water ponds. The 25-year projected savings is calculated in the table below. Note that the estimated current PG&E rate is about 17.5 cents per kilowatt hour (\$/kWh), while Solar Solutions rate is 15 cents per \$/kWh according to the proposed contract. PG&E rates are set to go up 8% in March 2021 to cover the cost of the various fire settlements. Some questions include:

1. Solar Solutions is a local franchise LLC which has obtained some kind of exclusive territory for southern California. Thus the staff is asserting that this must be a bid exempt contract. Solar Solutions is a local franchise of a company called EN-RGY Solutions, which seems to be based in Kansas. EN-RGY in turn seems to be to be backed by a North Carolina entity called Onset Capital Partners. Is staff sure that these are reliable solid business entities?
2. What happens if the Board of Supervisors determines to place the County in the clutches of Central Coast Community Energy (3CE)? Its current commercial rate per kWh does not seem to be obtainable from its website. Is it much lower?
3. The actual panels and anchoring system are produced by a French company called Ciel &Terre.



This company reports to have 240 projects installed worldwide. For the North American region it manufactures the panels in Indiana. Our perfectly good taxpaying nuclear plant, which employees 1800 people, is closing, and the County continues to send its energy money out of County, state, and country in the name of CO2 reduction. Ciel means sky, and terre means earth. So the County is contracting with Heaven and Earth?

Table 1: Cashflows for Floating Solar System

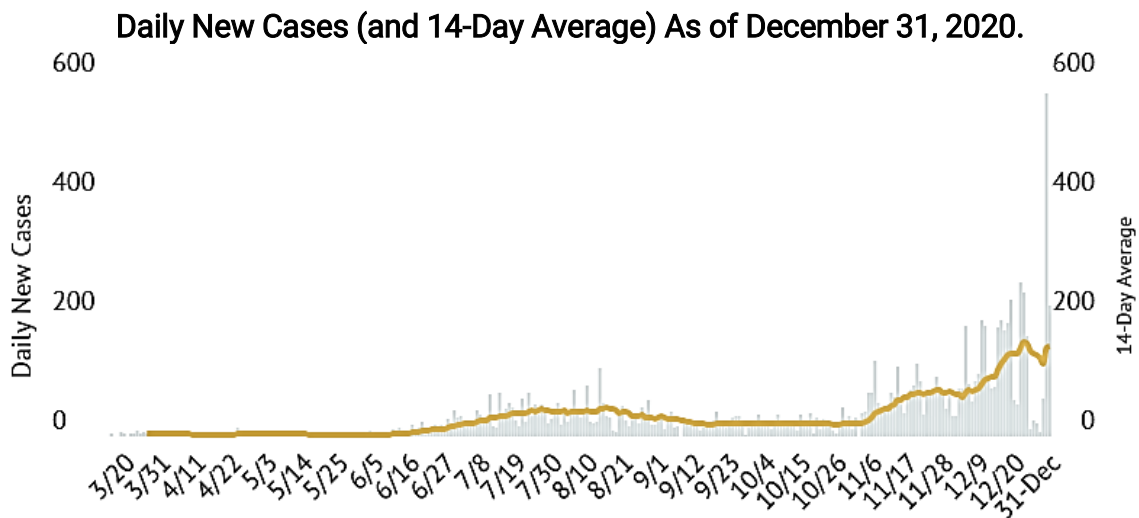
PPA Rate, (\$/kWh)*	\$0.1500
Current Blended Electricity Rate, (\$/kWh)	\$0.1775
kWh Consumed From PG&E, 2019	1,591,557
kWh Generated From Solar, Year 1	1,239,084
kWh Required from PG&E After Solar (Consumed – Generated)	352,473
Annual Historic Bill Without Solar, 2019	\$280,384
PPA Payment, Year 1 (PPA Rate x kWh Generated)	\$185,863
New PG&E Utility Bill (New PG&E Consumption x Blended Electricity Rate)	\$62,564
New Total Electricity Costs (PPA Payment + New PG&E Payment)	\$248,427
Year 1 Savings (Annual Historic Bill – New Total Electricity Costs)	\$31,957
25 Year PPA Savings**	\$3,144,191

* Fixed for 25 years

** Assumes an industry-standard 3% utility rate increase per year. Actual rate increase from 2018 to 2019 was 4.9%



Item 35 - COVID Status. Since the start of the Pandemic 11 months ago, the Board has scheduled the update as **Agenda Item 1**. For the first time it has now been placed in the regular section on Board business items. During many meetings there have been large numbers of people who have wished to publicly comment on the situation. Shifting it back into the business portion of the agenda will allow the Board to dispose of the consent items, which in turn allows most of the staff who must be present (on Zoom), to return to work instead of waiting around in case there are questions on a particular item for which they are responsible. It will also allow the Board to hear general public comment for matters not on the agenda prior to a lengthy segment on COVID.



Currently Hospitalized

60 (of whom 13 are in ICU)

Policy Issues:

A key issue for this week is whether the County should sue the Governor for exceeding his legal authority on the renewed lockdowns. (It was just renewed indefinitely.) The County could sue directly or join a suit on the same subject which has already been filed by San Bernardino County. At this point the issue may be moot, as the focus is moving to vaccine. What is the plan to get everyone vaccinated fast?

But are restaurants and saloons large transmitters? They do not seem to be the big transmitters that family gatherings have proven to be. Could the counties as a group convince the Governor of this fact?

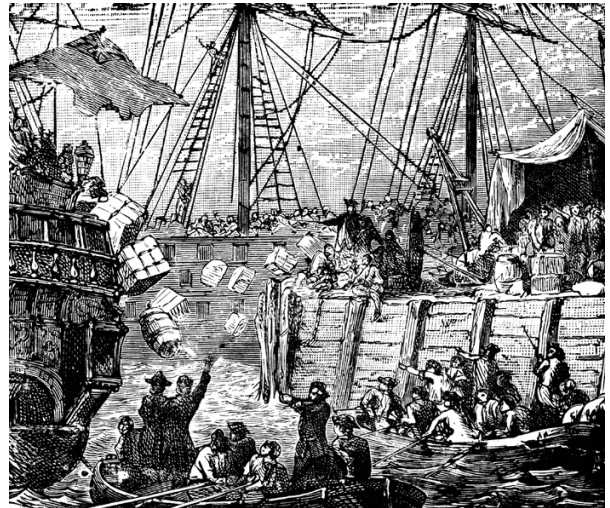
There is mounting despair from small businesses that have been especially hard hit. They are asking the Board to do something or anything to rescue them from the rules which are putting them out of business. The State has preemptively taken over the issue and removed local control from counties and cities. Putative President-Elect Biden announced last Tuesday that he intended for the Federal Government to take a much more aggressive and centralized control of the situation than now obtains under leadership by the states. This could pertain to lockdown standards, vaccine distribution, medical standards, and a number of non-medical issues such as rent deferrals, travel, and freedom of assembly.

Bigger Picture: If Biden and the progressive left can combine to annihilate as much of the middle class as possible, they will have gone a long way in accelerating the implementation of the centralized socialist state in America. The further expansion of the functions of government, the diminution of the Federalist model of powers reserved to the states which are not expressly granted to the Federal Government under the Constitution, and prohibition of public gatherings (only for conservatives and religious services) are all in train.

Plans to eliminate the Electoral College, add Senate Seats for Puerto Rico and Washington DC, and pack the Supreme Court are all being teed up. Power will be concentrated in California, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Illinois, Oregon, Washington State, and the DC – Virginia/Maryland suburbs. Government Unions, techno billionaires, the mainstream media, climatists, racialists and big education will consolidate their control. Once these steps are completed, there is no going back.

In these regards the millennial generation, which is about to replace the boomer generation in societal leadership, has been dealt a harsh hand. Globalism, technocracy, the rise of China, the government induced obliteration of the housing market through land rationing and massive undocumented illegal immigration and anti-assimilation, and climatist regulation has rendered them the first generation in American history that will be worse off than their parents. They are ripe for accepting socialism.

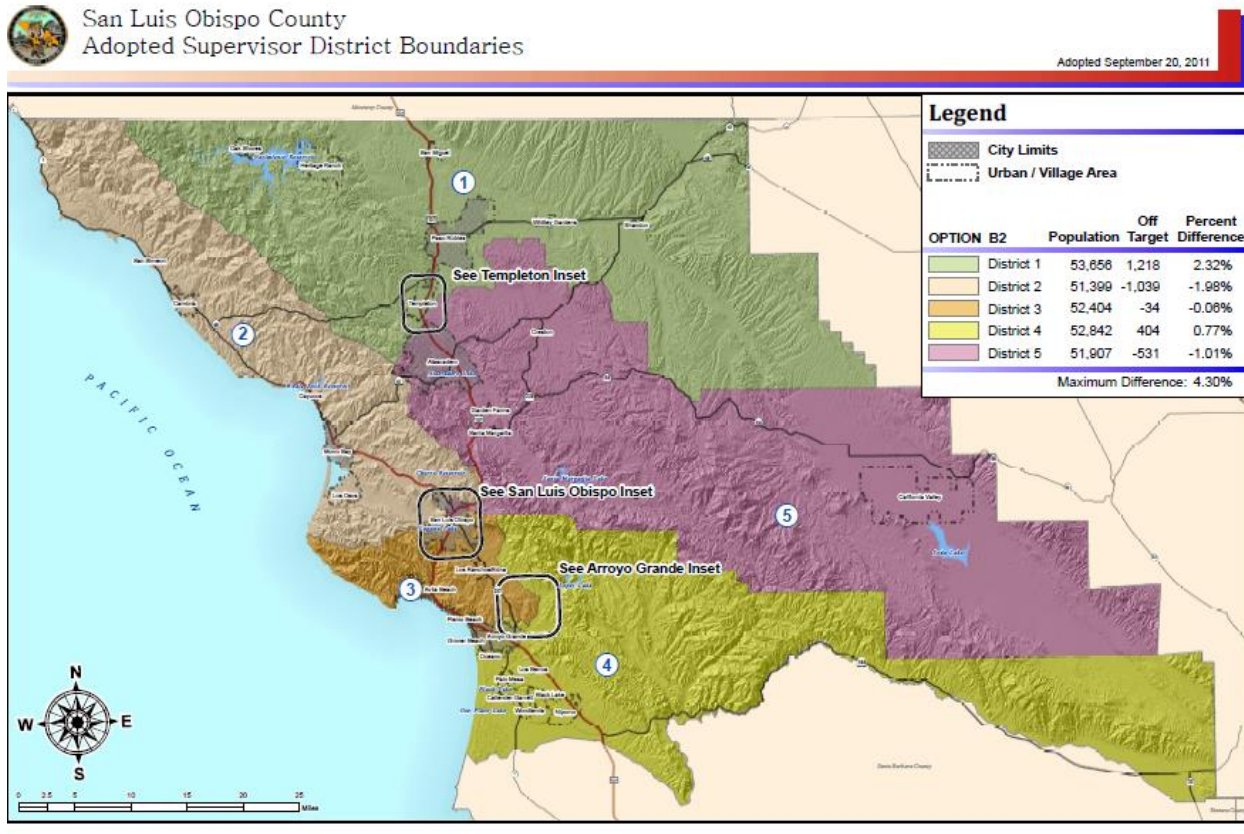
COVID has provided the left expedited cover. The question then becomes: should local officials revolt? But will the citizens who are advocating for the revolt simply front out their elected officials and then abandon them? Is the remaining middle class too morally weak and afraid to take to the streets in large numbers, or are they too economically comfortable and trying to hide out in the hope that this will pass? It is one thing to call in for 3 minutes to the Board meeting. It's another to show up and lay your body on the line on Monterey St. – COVID or not. Obviously, the other side is more than willing.



Is today's version COVID vaccine instead of tea?

Item 38 - Request to: 1) receive and file a report on redrawing supervisorial districts for the 2021 redistricting process; 2) provide staff direction regarding the Board's preferred methodology for the 2021 redistricting process; and 3) set a Special Board Meeting for 9:00 a.m.

on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 or for 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 to serve as the first required hearing related to redistricting. Redistricting of the Supervisorial districts due to decennial changes is one of the most important tasks facing the Board of Supervisors every 10 years after the census is completed. The existing boundary map is displayed below:



The item is very important. For this reason please open the link below and read it end to end so that you can fully participate when the County starts to solicit public input, which is required under State law. Control click on the link. It takes a few seconds to open and may ask you to allow it to proceed.

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/file/getfile/129144>

Three groups of requirements must be dealt with during the redistricting project.

A. The process requirements: There are 4 possible structures by which the project may be executed. The staff Board letter summarizes these as follows:

Option 1 - County Staff Advisory Committee: *The Board may appoint an internal County Staff Advisory Committee. This approach was used during the 2001 and 2011 redistricting processes. This approach will have the fastest timeframe, as County staff is prepared to begin work immediately. Additionally, it is anticipated that some of the County staff resources can be absorbed within the departments' existing budgets. The following represents the recommended makeup and responsibilities for the committee: 1) Administrative Office – Project management, Board liaison, public engagement 2) Planning & Building or Information Technology - GIS and map development 3) Public Works - Legal descriptions (metes and bounds) 4) County Counsel – legal advice 5)*

Information Technology – Website development 6) County Clerk Recorder - Public notices, elections perspective, implementation of new districts for elections/voting ballots.

Option 2 - Citizen Advisory Committee: *The Board may appoint a Citizen Advisory Committee to develop new district boundaries. The Board may determine the manner in which members are appointed, provided that elected officials, their family members, staff members, or paid campaign staff of the local jurisdiction, may not be appointed to serve on the commission.*

This method allows for the most direct public input and is used by the State and many of the largest counties, generally in accordance with established State statute(s) or county ordinances governing those counties' processes. County staff and resources will still be required to provide support in the form of GIS information, mapping, legal boundary descriptions and coordination and public outreach.

The Citizen Advisory Committee approach would extend the timeframe to complete redistricting by estimated three months or more depending on the length of the process to set rules and procedures for the committee, as well as to determine the process of and then implement the selection of committee members. It is expected that several additional items would need to be brought to your Board for discussion, direction, and approval.

Generally, counties that use this approach have multi-level selection processes to ensure fairness, equal community representation and to avoid future legal challenges alleging unfair representation or bias in the development of new boundaries .

The County of San Luis Obispo does not have an ordinance in place governing the supervisorial districts redistricting process. For example, the County of Santa Barbara selected its committee in a three-level selection process, including application screening for criteria set forth in the county's ordinance, random lottery selection of 5 members, followed by allowing the 5 randomly selected members to select an additional 5 and one at large members. The County of Santa Barbara's independent redistricting commission process started with a two-month application period in the summer of 2020 and the last seats on the commission were filled, over six months later, in December 2020.

Option 3 – Consultant Contract: *The Board may also enter into a contract with a consultant to develop new district boundaries. Many counties have opted for this approach to take advantage of the expertise of consulting firms with a history of involvement in redistricting process in California. This approach is generally considered the most likely to avoid future challenges to the updated boundaries. The Board may direct staff to retain a consultant to conduct all redistricting activities, including all drawing of draft maps, public outreach and coordination of public hearings and workshops.*

This approach would require the least information and support from County staff. Alternatively, the Board may direct staff to retain a consultant on a limited basis only to provide advice and guidance (a subject matter expert) to ensure that redrawn maps are compliant with applicable laws and not subject to challenges.

Under this approach, County staff will continue to lead with map development, legal descriptions and public outreach and coordination, and will use the consultant on an as needed basis. Depending on the cost of the consulting contract, certain to be higher for a consultant conducting all redistricting

activity, there will be up to two months of delay in the timeline for redistricting to allow for staff to complete a request for proposals (RFP) and/or vendor selection process.

Should the Board elect to use the approach of a consultant to conduct nearly all redistricting activities, staff will immediately begin developing a RFP and return to your Board with a contract for the selected consultant. Staff will also return to the Board with recommendations for any funding necessary for County staff backfill, services and supplies related to public hearings and workshops, and software costs.

Option 4 - County Staff version as in Option 1 above but assisted by an expert legal technical consultant: *Alternatively, the Board may direct staff to retain a consultant on a limited basis only to provide advice and guidance (a subject matter expert) to ensure that redrawn maps are compliant with applicable laws and not subject to challenges. Under this approach, County staff will continue to lead with map development, legal descriptions and public outreach and coordination, and will use the consultant on an as needed basis.*

We recommend option 4 as cost effective, expeditious, and providing sufficient expert quality control. **Option 2**, the Santa Barbara County version, is very cumbersome, expensive, and subject to manipulation. Even though the underlying state legislation and County ordinance attempts to severely limit partisan political influence and/or cronyism, once interested citizens are placed in control they are subject to the ordinary pressures and subjective feelings. In other words they are only human. There is no such thing as apolitical citizens, especially ones who will serve on such a time consuming and intense commission.

Worse yet, the left would no doubt find volunteers who meet the criteria, such as having no background in political campaigns, donations, etc., but who would serve as secret agents to manipulate the process.

Staff is pledged to be apolitical in its official work but may harbor deep feelings about which factions are more amenable to expanding the role of government, improving pay and benefits, and providing longevity. Thus it is impossible to find a pure and foolproof process. In the end the safest path is to allow staff to study the matter and provide alternative recommendations, and for the Board to adopt the final boundaries.

B. State Substantive Requirements and Standards: *To the best extent possible the new district boundaries must comport with the standards listed below:*

Constitutions, the Voting Rights Act and Elections Code Sections 21500 et seq. *These authorities require that districts be based on total population and must have substantially equal population per district.*

Additionally, these authorities generally prohibit using race as a predominate criteria for redrawing districts or diluting the voting rights of racial or language minority communities to elect representatives of their choice.

Further, under the California Elections Code, the updated districts must be redrawn using the following criteria, in order of priority:

1) To the extent practicable, districts must be geographically contiguous

- 2) *To the extent practicable, districts must maintain the geographic integrity of neighborhoods and communities of interest*
- 3) *To the extent practicable, districts must minimize division of cities or census designated places*
- 4) *Boundaries must be easily identifiable and, if possible, bound by natural/artificial barriers*
- 5) *To the extent practicable, districts must not favor or discriminate against any political party*

C. Participation and Meeting Requirements: The County may set up as extensive a process as it wishes. At a minimum it must comport with those listed in the schedule below. It is likely there will be additional meetings and educational forums by district and/or community advisory council, etc. There is some pretty nifty software which allows both officials and lay people to draw potential boundaries. It calculates how many people would be in each district and allows users to draw up maps.

Attachment 1

2021 Redistricting Tentative Timeline

January 5, 2021	(Planned) Initial Board Business Item to seek direction on methodology for redistricting; set special Board meeting for February
February-April 2021	Special Board meeting (<i>1st Public Hearing</i>)
January-May 2021	Depending on January 5, 2021 direction - Form County staff team and coordinate roles/responsibilities, begin RFP process or begin Citizen Committee Selection Process
April 1, 2021	US Census Bureau provides 2020 Census data

County Staff Advisory Committee	Full-Service Consultant or Citizen Committee	Action
	May 2021	(Tentative) Consultant contract approval at BOS/Citizen Committee Final selection
April 2021	June 2021	Launch redistricting webpage to post data, Board-approved methodology, hearing/workshop dates, allow for public input; seek input from cities and Special Districts
May-June 2021	June-July 2021	Develop 3-4 redistricting plans/draft maps
June 22, 2021	August 10, 2021	Present plans/maps to Board for direction (<i>2nd Public Hearing</i>)
June-July 2021	August-September 2021	After-hours Public Workshop with modified plans/maps (<i>3rd public hearing/workshop</i>)
July 22 or August 10, 2021	September 14 or September 28, 2021	Present updated plans/maps and public input summary to Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First possible date to approve redistricting plan – August 1, 2021
August-September 2021	October 2021	Finalize options per Board direction
September 28, 2021	November 2, 2021	Hearing to approve redistricting plan/maps (<i>4th Public Hearing</i>)

November 15, 2021

Recommended adoption; 30 days prior to final adoption due date – allows updated ordinance to be effective by December 15, 2022 (avoid potential delays in implementation if challenged)

December 15, 2022

Last date to adopt redistricting plan

If the County fails to adopt a legal plan by the deadline, a Court will impose the new boundaries. [21509.](#)

(a) If the board does not adopt supervisorial district boundaries by the deadlines set forth in Section 21501, the board shall immediately petition the superior court of the county for an order adopting supervisorial district boundaries. If the board does not petition the superior court within five days after the deadline, any resident of the county may file that petition and shall be entitled to recover the resident’s reasonable attorney’s fees and costs from the county for doing so.

Item 41 - Hearing to adopt the attached Ordinances amending Title 22 (Land Use Ordinance), Title 23 (Coastal Zone Land Use Ordinance), and Chapter 1.05 (Administrative Fines) of Title 1 (General Provisions) of the San Luis Obispo County Code to establish a hearing officer for traditional code enforcement cases and make additional amendments to facilitate a more effective and efficient code enforcement process. The proposed hearing officer would hear cases and appeals of fines, and to attempt to obtain compliance without going before the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors or ending up in Court. This is already the process for cannabis violations and seems to be working well. Other jurisdictions use this process successfully.

**San Luis Obispo County Council of Governments Meeting of Wednesday, January 6, 2021
(Scheduled) 8:30 AM**

Item C-1: 2021 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP). While the politicians are always crying about not having enough road money, this item shows that they expect about \$617 million over the next 5 years from Federal, State, and local sources for the projects listed on the next 2 pages below. The revenue summary projection is presented immediately below. This does not seem to contain all the new SB-1 gas tax money.

TABLE 1: REVENUE

**San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
2021 Federal Transportation Program
(\$'s in 1,000)**

Funding Source/Program		NOTE	4 YEAR (FTIP Period)				
			FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	TOTAL
LOCAL	Gas Tax						
	Gas Tax (Subventions to Cities)						
	Gas Tax (Subventions to Counties)						
	Other Local Funds		\$6,001	\$9,220	\$28,145	\$5,260	\$48,626
	County General Funds		\$949		\$5,100	\$1,370	\$7,419
	City General Funds	FY2	\$1,160	\$5,325	\$19,153		\$25,638
	RSTP Exchange funds		\$3,672	\$3,895	\$3,892	\$3,890	\$15,549
	Transit						
	Transit Fares						
	Other (See Appendix 1)		\$4,588	\$7,181	\$6,250	\$8,653	\$24,826
Local Total			\$10,539	\$16,401	\$34,398	\$12,113	\$73,452
STATE	State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) ¹		\$47,424	\$47,979	\$57,419	\$44,274	\$197,096
	SHOPP		\$47,424	\$47,979	\$57,419	\$44,274	\$197,096
	State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) ¹		\$111,310	\$123,000	\$22,767	\$152	\$257,229
	STIP		\$111,310	\$123,000	\$22,767	\$152	\$257,229
	Active Transportation Program (ATP) ¹		\$3,168				\$3,168
	Highway Maintenance (HM) Program ¹		\$4,940	\$5,517			\$10,457
	Highway Bridge Program (HBP) ¹		\$3,883	\$1,367		\$2,187	\$7,437
	State Transit Assistance (STA)(e.g., population/revenue based, Prop 42)		\$2	\$2			\$4
	Other (See Appendix 3)		\$7,300				\$7,300
State Total			\$178,027	\$177,865	\$80,186	\$46,613	\$482,691
FEDERAL TRANSIT	5307 - Urbanized Area Formula Grants		\$6,115	\$8,692	\$6,513	\$8,071	\$29,391
	5311 - Formula Grants for Rural Areas		\$2,260	\$599	\$617	\$635	\$4,112
	Federal Transit Total		\$8,375	\$9,291	\$7,130	\$8,706	\$33,502
FEDERAL HIGHWAY	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program		\$1,269	\$1,027	\$6,825	\$2,556	\$11,677
	Highway Infrastructure Program (HIP)		\$1,969				\$1,969
	Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)			\$1,448			\$1,448
	Federal Highway Total		\$3,238	\$2,475	\$6,825	\$2,556	\$15,094
Federal Total			\$11,613	\$11,765	\$13,955	\$11,262	\$48,595
INNOVATIVE FINANCE	TFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act)		\$13,080				\$13,080
	Other (See Appendix 7)						
Innovative Financing Total			\$13,080				\$13,080
REVENUE TOTAL			\$213,259	\$206,031	\$128,539	\$69,989	\$617,818

Financial Summary Notes:

¹ State Programs that include both state and federal funds.

² CMAQ Swap/SACOG FY20(\$1,463), FY21(\$1,274),FY22(\$1,531)

Also check out some of the ones you may not think should be part of your transportation dollars. For example, **Item 1** below is a \$1.399 million payoff of SLOCOG PERS pension debt. How did that happen? Did prior SLOCOG Boards knowingly allow the agency not to pay its annual PERS costs?

Item 1:

22300000907	San Luis Obispo Regional Transit	PERS Deb Payoff	PERS Deb Payoff (1/3 (\$333K each UZA) \$111,100 each/annually for 3 years	\$333,300	\$733,300	\$333,300	\$0	\$0	\$1,399,900
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Item 2 is the replacement of the SLO City tourist trolley.

Item 2:

22300000910	San Luis Obispo Regional Transit	SCT Replace Trolley	In South County (SCT), Capital Assistance to replace Trolley	\$0	\$293,200	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$293,200
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Item 3 is a program to send staff out to promote kids riding bikes to school. Yikes, the government has to use our gas taxes to get kids to do something they all want to do anyhow?

Item 3:

22300000773	San Luis Obispo Council of Governments	SLO Regional Rideshare - Learn by Doing	In-class education including on-bike instruction, active transportation maps created by parents and students, and before/after school encouragement activities (walk/bike to school days, rodeos, walking school buses & bike trains)	\$0	\$0	\$80,000	\$0	\$0	\$80,000
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Below is a compendium of the bigger projects

APPENDIX B – Project list by Performance Measure

Caltrans PM 1 2020 Safety Performance Targets – Projects List

PROJECT_ID	PPNO	EA_NU	PROJECT_TITLE	LEAD_AGENCY	PM	FTIP Total	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
22300000658	0226J	3307A	Route 46 Corridor Improvements (Cholame)	Caltrans	X	\$93,955	\$93,955	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000667	0226K	3307C	Route 46/41 Wye	Caltrans	X	\$111,200	\$0	\$111,200	\$0	\$0
22300000765	0226L	3307E	Route 46 Antelope Grade	Caltrans	X	\$97,494	\$0	\$10,300	\$87,194	\$0
22300000848	N/A	1J780	Wellsona Road Safety Improvements	Caltrans	X	\$22,508	\$3,932	\$18,576	\$0	\$0
22300000887	N/A	1K850	Rumble Strip Project	Caltrans	X	\$3,218	\$3,218	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000836	N/A	N/A	SR 227 Operational Improvements: Los Ranchos Rd.	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$4,203	\$0	\$0	\$2,862	\$1,341
22300000837	N/A	N/A	SR 227 Roundabout - Operational Improvements: Buckley Rd.	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$5,350	\$250	\$0	\$5,100	\$0
22300000850	N/A	N/A	Metal Beam Guardrails - H9-05-003	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$999	\$0	\$999	\$0	\$0
22300000851	N/A	N/A	LED Street Lights - H9-05-004	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$150	\$0	\$150	\$0	\$0
						\$339,077				

PM 2 Infrastructure Performance Measures – Projects List

PROJECT_ID	PPNO	EA_NU	PROJECT_TITLE	LEAD_AGENCY	PM 2	FTIP Total	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
22300000748	72	0L721	Toro Creek Bridge Replacement	Caltrans	X	\$11,555	\$11,555	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000749	0072A	0L722	Old Creek Bridge Widening	Caltrans	X	\$13,988	\$13,988	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000832	N/A	N/A	Grouped Projects for Highway Bridge Program	Caltrans	X	\$6,962	\$4,056	\$1,475	\$0	\$1,431
22300000839	2630	1G980	Pismo Beach Upgrade ADA Curb Ramps and Pavement	Caltrans	X	\$13,320	\$0	\$13,320	\$0	\$0
22300000842	2650	1H440	Guadalupe Bridge Replacement	Caltrans	X	\$48,256	\$3,972	\$0	\$44,284	\$0
22300000853	2765	1J710	US 101 Open Graded Asphalt Concrete Overlay - near Route 58 to Santa Barb	Caltrans	X	\$4,373	\$4,373	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000881	2927	1K720	Morro Road Soldier Pile Wall	Caltrans	X	\$7,239	\$1,722	\$5,517	\$0	\$0
22300000854	N/A	N/A	Bridge No 49C0274 Huasna Rd over Huasna River	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$800	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$800
						\$106,493				

PM 3 Caltrans PM 3 Targets – Projects List

PROJECT_ID	PPNO	EA_NU	PROJECT_TITLE	LEAD_AGENCY	PM	FTIP Total	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
22300000892	4856B	0A370	Brisco-Halcyon Road Interchange Modifications Project	Arroyo Grande, City of	X	\$17,570	\$1,180	\$5,325	\$11,065	\$0
22300000900	N/A	1J860	US 101 - Transportation Management Systems - South County	Caltrans	X	\$38,512	\$1,610	\$0	\$3,864	\$33,038
22300000901	N/A	1K460	SR 46 East - Transportation Management System	Caltrans	X	\$11,247	\$477	\$1,499	\$9,271	\$0
22300000902	N/A	1J970	SR 58 - Transportation Management System	Caltrans	X	\$15,995	\$1,622	\$3,221	\$0	\$11,152
22300000460	N/A	N/A	Route 1/SR 41 Interchange Operational Improvements	Morro Bay, City of	X	\$7,490	\$0	\$0	\$7,490	\$0
22300000446	2369	N/A	Vine Street Realignment (SR 46W / US101 Ph2)	Paso Robles, City of	X	\$10,612	\$0	\$0	\$10,612	\$0
22300000671	2559	45131	US 101/Rt 46W Interchange Improvements	Paso Robles, City of	X	\$1,300	\$0	\$1,300	\$0	\$0
22300000652	N/A	N/A	Regional Transportation Demand Management Program	San Luis Obispo Council	X	\$675	\$275	\$200	\$200	\$0
22300000836	N/A	N/A	SR 227 Operational Improvements: Los Ranchos Rd.	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$4,203	\$0	\$0	\$2,862	\$1,341
22300000837	N/A	N/A	SR 227 Roundabout - Operational Improvements: Buckley Rd.	San Luis Obispo County	X	\$5,350	\$250	\$0	\$5,100	\$0
						\$112,954				

Note the huge amount below that is going to buses, which hardly anyone rides.

Transit Asset Management Regional Targets – Projects List

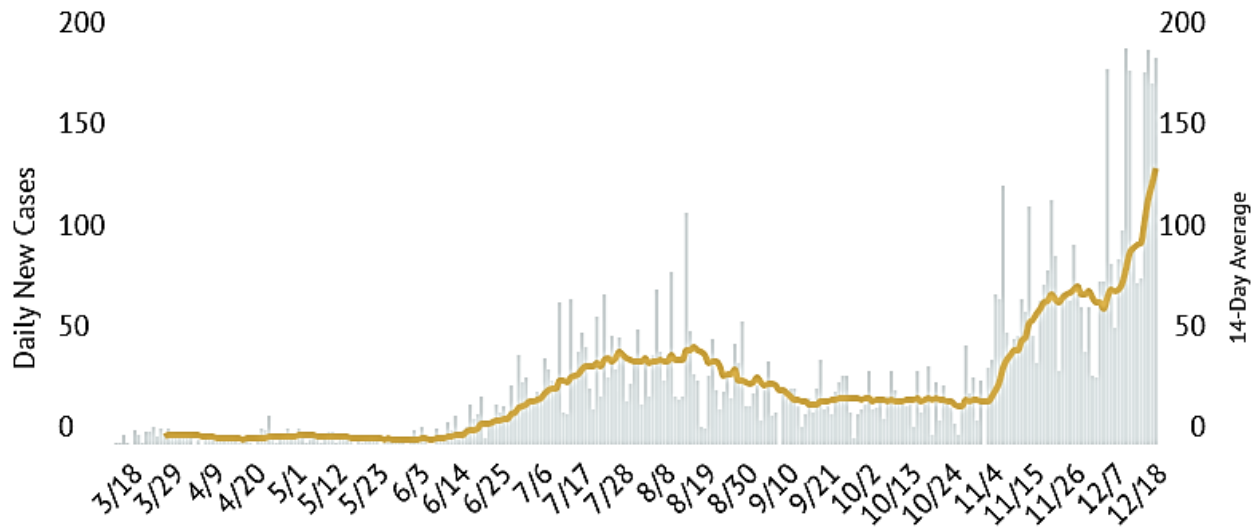
PROJECT_ID	PPNO	EA_NUM	PROJECT_TITLE	LEAD_AGENCY	TAM	FTIP Total	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
22300000503	N/A	N/A	Atascadero Transit Local Operations (5307)	Atascadero, City of	X	\$2,087	\$555	\$574	\$475	\$483
22300000543	N/A	N/A	Atascadero Dial-a-Ride Vehicle Replacement	Atascadero, City of	X	\$217	\$0	\$103	\$0	\$114
22300000840	4022	0N220	Transportation Management - TMC's and Field Equipment	Caltrans	X	\$4,328	\$4,328	\$0	\$0	\$0
22300000651	N/A	N/A	Rideshare Vanpool Subsidy	San Luis Obispo Council	X	\$480	\$125	\$160	\$195	\$0
22300000425	N/A	N/A	Regional Operating Assistance (5311)	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$5,256	\$1,287	\$1,305	\$1,323	\$1,341
22300000540	N/A	N/A	Paso Express Operations and General Dial-a-Ride (5307)	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$1,824	\$0	\$578	\$608	\$638
22300000552	N/A	N/A	RTA North County Operations	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$7,492	\$1,446	\$1,918	\$2,014	\$2,114
22300000554	N/A	N/A	RTA Vehicle Maintenance Equipment	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$191	\$45	\$46	\$49	\$51
22300000555	N/A	N/A	RTA Operations in Central Area	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$4,840	\$950	\$1,242	\$1,304	\$1,344
22300000558	N/A	N/A	RTA Runabout (ADA) Vehicles	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$1,044	\$97	\$0	\$850	\$97
22300000676	N/A	N/A	RTA Route 9 Express Service	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$400	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
22300000686	N/A	N/A	RTA Operations in South County	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$4,360	\$879	\$1,126	\$1,160	\$1,195
22300000793	N/A	N/A	RTA Route 10 Express Service	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$400	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100
22300000794	N/A	N/A	Paso Robles Minivans	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$117	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$117
22300000909	N/A	N/A	Replace South County Support Vehicles	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$117	\$0	\$0	\$117	\$0
22300000910	N/A	N/A	SCT Replace Trolley	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$293	\$0	\$293	\$0	\$0
22300000911	N/A	N/A	RTA - Fixed Route Bus and Cutaways Replacement - Capital Assistance	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$3,226	\$0	\$1,116	\$0	\$2,110
22300000912	N/A	N/A	RTA Support Vehicles Replacement - Capital Assistance	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$214	\$0	\$58	\$122	\$34
22300000913	N/A	N/A	RTA North Bus Stop Improvements	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$182	\$43	\$44	\$47	\$48
22300000914	N/A	N/A	South County Transit - Bus Stop Improvements	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$216	\$50	\$53	\$55	\$58
22300000915	N/A	N/A	RTA Mobile Radio Equipment	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$63	\$0	\$63	\$0	\$0
22300000917	N/A	N/A	SLO RTA - Replace Fixed Route Buses and Cutaways	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$844	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$844
22300000918	N/A	N/A	SLO RTA - Vehicle Engine Rehabilitation	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$844	\$0	\$0	\$375	\$469
22300000919	N/A	N/A	SLO RTA - Purchase two (x2) Cutaway ADA Buses	San Luis Obispo Regiona	X	\$338	\$225	\$113	\$0	\$0
22300000544	N/A	N/A	SLO Transit Operations	San Luis Obispo, City of	X	\$9,488	\$710	\$2,840	\$2,925	\$3,013
22300000545	N/A	N/A	SLO Transit Preventive Maintenance	San Luis Obispo, City of	X	\$1,023	\$246	\$254	\$259	\$264
22300000908	N/A	N/A	Four new electric buses (e-Bus)	San Luis Obispo, City of	X	\$3,460	\$1,730	\$1,730	\$0	\$0
22300000548	N/A	N/A	South County Transit Operations	South County Transit	X	\$4,742	\$936	\$1,232	\$1,268	\$1,306
22300000873	N/A	N/A	South County Transit Fleet Replacement	South County Transit	X	\$1,995	\$1,268	\$0	\$0	\$727
						\$60,081				

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, December 22, 2020 (Were Not Scheduled – Christmas/New Year’s Holiday Recess)

Issue 1 - COVID Status and Community Frustration. As of December 18, 2020

Daily New Cases (and 14-Day Average)



35 (of whom 8 are in ICU)

HOSPITALIZED

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

ANDY CALDWELL

THE SLO PSYCHIC (2021 PREDICTIONS)

Supervisor Bruce Gibson who has always believed he is the smartest person in any room will take a cue from “**Dr.**” **Jill Biden, aka Dr. Pepper**, who, by Joe Biden’s own account, pursued a doctorate of education for the sole purpose of obtaining the prestige of being called “doctor”. Well, as everyone knows, Gibson actually has a **real PhD**, but, by golly, not enough people seem to appreciate how smart he is. So, beginning in 2021, he will demand that everyone address him as **Dr. Professor Genius Supervisor Bruce Gibson**.

County Supervisor Lynn Compton will confirm the rumor. She really was the inspiration behind the movie *Legally Blonde*. She will insist that Dr. Professor Genius Supervisor Gibson call her **Juris Doctor Sorority Queen Supervisor Compton**.

Supervisor Arnold will continue to go by Debbie.

Tianna Arata, she of SLO Black Lives Matter Fame, will not only be exonerated from the crime of having successfully blocked the freeway in SLO two out of three attempts, she will demand reparations in the form of having her favorite part of the freeway named in her honor. The sign will read, “**The Tianna Arata f#@! the Police, America and Dan Dow Memorial Freeway**”!

Tom Fulks, the wickedly acerbic (emphasis on the word- wicked) political hack writer of the San Luis Tribune, will finally be forced to report his salary as a political contribution to and from the SLO progressives/democratic party. As such, every column he writes will henceforth be **labeled “paid political ad”**.

SLO Mayor Heidi Harmon wants her mayoral term extended for an additional two years because in her words, “elections cause too much drama”! Drama? Heidi doesn’t like drama? My prediction for the new year is that SLO’s full time drama queen will **exchange the rose in her hair for a wreath** as she mourns the fact that she aided and abetted the demise of one of the most lovely and livable towns in America by way of coddling the homeless, supporting anarchy in the streets, and pushing a climate agenda that will make living in SLO even less affordable.

It is not my habit to kick a man when he is down, let alone dead. Having said that, all the people who hoped the **FBI raid** and investigation on **Adam Hill’s** office and home died when he did will have a rude awakening in 2021. That is, the odds that the FBI were investigating Hill alone is slim to none. This has to do with the fact that very few people suspected of committing crimes having to do with “**pay to play**” do so without having **partners in the crime**.

AN AGENDA TO REALIGN CALIFORNIA POLITICS

BY EDWARD RING

When it comes to California's political dysfunction, over and over, the story's already been told. Failing schools, crumbling infrastructure. Highest taxes, highest unemployment, and highest cost-of-living. Hostile business climate. Crippling, punitive regulations and fees. Widest gap between rich and poor. Burning forests, lawless streets. Record numbers of homeless. Unaffordable housing. Water rationing, electricity blackouts. And on and on. We get it.

When it comes to California's political hierarchy, again it's a familiar story. Progressive liberals run almost everything. The political spending by government unions and leftist billionaires, overwhelmingly favoring housebroken incumbents, leave reform minded challengers decisively outgunned. The political bias of literally all the online and legacy media leave principled conservatives without a voice.

This is the context through which it is indeed surprising and impressive that California's conservatives logged some significant wins in the November election. Critics downplay these victories – including flipping four U.S. Congressional seats and beating back a partial repeal of Prop. 13 – and instead remind everyone how California remains a one-party state, with progressive liberals still in absolute control of the state legislature, all higher state offices, and almost every city and county. But California's conservative challengers had far less money, and they faced relentless media hostility. It's a wonder they ever win anything, anywhere.

So what's next for California's conservatives? Or more to the point, what's next for *all* Californians who agree regardless of their party affiliation that life in California could be better, much better, and that current government policies are to blame?

For starters, conservatives cannot identify a problem without simultaneously proposing a solution. And a unifying theme that should accompany proposed solutions is that nearly everyone wants the same result, regardless of their party ideology. That would mean acknowledging that progressive liberals – at least the idealists among them – have always had good intentions. But their policies have failed and it's time to try something new.

Equally important, conservatives need to propose big solutions. Incrementalism is boring, costs too much to sell (because it's so boring), and takes too long to make a difference. Conservatives need to propose dramatic changes in policies that will *terrify* the progressive liberal elite. They need to propose solutions that will attract billions in opposition political spending, and then highlight how much money the opposition is

spending to stop their ideas. They need to literally use the heavy spending by the establishment opposition as a weapon against them.

Solving the Problem of Failing Schools

The issue where principled conservatives can immediately seize the initiative and build a populist movement with the potential to immediately grow into an electoral supermajority is with public education. The teachers' union has squandered much of its political capital by insisting on a near total lockdown of K-12 public schools in California, at the same time as private schools and a significant number of public charter schools have remained open.

The performance of California's public schools was already dismal, especially in low income communities, even before COVID came along, but the innovations spawned during the shutdown have made the case for school choice more compelling than ever. Everyone in California wants K-12 schools to successfully educate children. Why not issue vouchers that parents can redeem as homeschoolers, or in micro-schools and pod-schools, or for private academies, parochial schools, charter schools, or traditional public schools. All that might be required for accreditation would be for the student body to reach or surpass minimum standards each year on standardized achievement tests. The case for vouchers is compelling.

California's public schools receive approximately \$15,000 per student per year from taxpayers. This equates to a \$300,000 per year budget for one classroom with 20 students. That sort of budget will lease a pretty good classroom and a pretty good teacher, with plenty left over for educational materials. But even without vouchers, there are several ways that reforms can fundamentally transform and improve educational opportunities in California in both K-12 and college education. Here are a few:

- 1 – Create a voucher system for K-12 education, whereby every household with school age children is issued vouchers they can redeem at the school of their choice.
- 2 – Repeal legislation and regulations that restrict the formation of charter schools.
- 3 – Authorize through legislation the ability for homeschools, micro schools, pod schools, and distance learning programs to operate under the auspices of charter schools.
- 4 – Implement the work rule reforms sought after in the Vergara case – longer time before granting tenure, merit over seniority in layoffs, streamlined ability to terminate incompetent teachers.
- 5 – Restore the primacy of the SAT test in governing admission to public colleges and universities.
- 6 – Bring back vocational training programs in California's high schools and junior colleges.

7 – Restore immutable discipline standards to make California’s high schools safe learning environments, expel disruptive students into special schools where they can be helped appropriately.

8 – Abolish all “diversity, equity and inclusion” programs as part of a headcount cut of at least 50 percent of nonfaculty personnel at public colleges and universities.

Education reform is the key to empowering the next generation of Californians, but there are other compelling issues that can be honestly promoted as nonpartisan solutions that will benefit all Californians. California’s neglected infrastructure is a prime example, because the quality of California’s water, energy and transportation infrastructure is what enables economic growth and broadly distributed prosperity. The challenge with infrastructure is that it requires several fundamental shifts in policy that are difficult to distill into a coherent package for voters. But one at a time, conservatives can advocate a transformative agenda for water, energy and transportation, with the priority falling on water.

Solving the Problem of Neglected Infrastructure

Conservatives should back a \$50 billion water bond, with the proceeds used to increase the annual water supply by at least 5 million acre feet. The bond would be crafted to allocate 100 percent of the funds to either the production, collection, or distribution of water. For example, California’s aqueducts and levees would be restored. Southern California’s urban water districts would achieve nearly total water independence through a combination of desalination plants and treatment plants with the capacity to convert 100 percent of wastewater to potable water. The various proposed surface storage projects, including Pacheco, Sites, and Temperance Flat reservoirs would be fully funded and expedited. The height of Lake Shasta Dam would be raised the proposed 18 feet. In this grand bargain, water abundance would be achieved in California, allowing environmentalists and farmers to receive their desired allotments, and urban users would no longer face rationing.

Here is a hypothetical list of the specific expenditures that would increase California’s annual supply of water by over 5 million acre feet:

1 – Build the Sites Reservoir (annual yield 0.5 MAF) – \$5.0 billion.

2 – Build the Temperance Flat Reservoir (annual yield 0.25 MAF) – \$3.0 billion.

3 – Raise the height of the Shasta Dam (increased annual yield 0.5 MAF) – \$2.0 billion.

4 – So Cal water recycling plants to potable standards with 1.0 MAF capacity – \$7.5 billion.

5 – So Cal desalination plants with 1.0 MAF capacity – \$15.0 billion.

6 – Desalination plants on Central and North coasts with 0.5 MAF capacity – 7.5 billion

7 – Central and Northern California water recycling plants to potable standards with 1.0 MAF capacity – \$7.5 billion.

8 – Facilities to capture runoff for aquifer recharge (annual yield 0.75 MAF) – \$5.0 billion.

Total – \$52.5 billion. Increased supply – 5.5 MAF.

On the issue of energy, conservatives can pursue a strategy that doesn't seek to completely derail California's commitment to renewables, but makes obvious and necessary adjustments. For example, conservatives should fight to keep Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in operation till the end of its useful life, which with regular upgrades could be several more decades. Conservatives should reverse the growing, misguided moves by progressive environmentalists to restrict the use of natural gas. And conservatives should require renewable energy providers to guarantee to any public utility customer a continuous, year-round supply of energy, and build that into their pricing, so that renewables do not unfairly drive other energy providers out of business.

When it comes to transportation, conservatives can reliably expect grassroots support to mothball the bullet train project, but conservatives should at the same time propose the funds that would have been allocated for high speed rail be redirected into transportation projects. Nearly all of California's interstate highways need to have lanes added and resurfacing. Why isn't I-5 three lanes in both directions from LA to Redding? What about Highway 99 and Highway 101? Conservatives should also advocate for more research and development of "smart lanes" or "hyperlanes" where high speed electric cars can run on autopilot. That innovation, along with passenger drones, is just around the corner, and if California is determined to be a leading edge state, developing these next generation roads for next generation cars is far more prescient than high speed rail.

Solving the Problem of Affordable Housing and Helping the Homeless

The other big issue, arguably bigger than everything mentioned so far, is housing and the homeless, and the interrelated issue of how to take back the lawless enclaves across California where tens of thousands of homeless have congregated. The first step is to rebalance the housing market. Conservatives must make it clear that "infill," or "smart growth," whereby nearly all the growth in housing stock occurs within the footprint of existing cities, is not going to solve the problem. Using taxpayer dollars to build subsidized multi-family dwellings in established neighborhoods is a divisive, futile exercise that only benefits opportunistic developers who build them at a cost of around \$500,000 per unit. There are terrific alternative solutions that would actually work.

For less money, the enabling infrastructure of roads, parks, and utility conduits can be extended onto open land on the urban fringe. Why are the rolling hills east of San Jose still cattle ranches? If they're so steep, why does San Francisco even exist? Why aren't new towns springing up along the entire Highway 101 and Interstate 5 corridors? It's just grazing land. You could build ten million homes on big lots in these areas of California, and you would barely make a dent in the remaining open space. Conservatives need to advocate laws that clear out the obstacles to constructing entire new cities. Conservatives need to make absolutely clear to voters that the reason homes cost so much is because of excessive laws, regulations, fees, and politically contrived scarcity of available land. Housing is indeed a human right, but the obligation of government is not to construct free housing, but to create the regulatory environment where private, unsubsidized builders can again make a profit building affordable homes. They do it in Texas. We can do it here. For example:

Ways housing could be more appropriately developed in California:

1 – Eliminate all forms of government subsidies, incentives or waivers to any developers. All players in the housing industry should be unsubsidized, and playing by the same set of rules.

2 – Stop requiring diverse types of housing within the same development or neighborhood. Mixing high-density, subsidized housing into residential neighborhoods devalues the existing housing, and this social engineering is unfair to existing residents who have paid a high price to live there.

3 – Roll back the more extreme building codes. Requiring 100 percent of homes to be “energy neutral” or include rooftop photovoltaic arrays, for example, greatly increase the cost of homes.

4 – Lower the fees on building permits for new housing and housing remodels. Doing this might require pension reform, since that's where all extra revenue goes, but until permitting costs are lowered, only billionaire developers can afford to build.

5 – Speed up the permitting process. It can take years to get permits approved in California. Again, the practical effect of this failure is that only major developers can afford to build.

6 – Reform the California Environmental Quality Act as follows: prohibit duplicative lawsuits, require full disclosure of identity of litigants, outlaw legal delaying tactics, prohibit rulings that stop entire project on single issue, and require the loser to pay the legal fees. Better yet, scrap it altogether. Federal laws already provide adequate environmental safeguards.

7 – Make it easier to extract building materials in-state. California, spectacularly rich in natural resources, has to import lumber and aggregate from as far away as Canada. This not only greatly increases construction costs, it's hypocritical.

8 – Increase the supply of land for private development of housing. Currently only five percent of California is urbanized. There are thousands of square miles of non-farm, non critical habitat that could be opened up for massive land development.

9 – Engage in practical, appropriate zoning for infill and densification in urban cores, but only after also increasing the supply of open land for housing, and only while continuing to respect the integrity of established residential neighborhoods.

The issue of housing segues naturally into the issue of the homeless, now estimated at around 150,000 in California. Experts on the homeless divide them into three groups, the “have nots,” the “can nots,” and the “will nots.” The have nots are people who have had a series of economic or medical catastrophes and usually with some help from friends or friendly agencies they get back on their feet. But the majority of unsheltered homeless in California belong to the other two groups. The “can nots” are people who are disabled or mentally ill. They are typically incapable of living independently. The rest, constituting the majority of the unsheltered homeless in California, are “will nots.” These are people who have been attracted to, for example, the beaches of Southern California, where they can live on the streets year-round, taking advantage of free food in the shelters, a vibrant drug scene, and laws that have effectively decriminalized theft up to \$950 per day, as well as possession and consumption of virtually any recreational drug including methamphetamine and heroin.

The solution to the problem of California’s homeless starts by recognizing that the obligations of compassion do not extend to tolerating theft, intoxication, or vagrancy, much less physical drug addiction as a “lifestyle.” People who live this way do not need indulgence, they need help. The current practice of building shelters on some of the most expensive real estate on earth, without even performing background checks or requiring sobriety, is a disgraceful waste of money. There are very specific steps that can be taken, as follows:

1 – Challenge the ruling *Jones vs the City of Los Angeles* in court, with the objective of redefining “permanent supportive housing” as inexpensive tents and community kitchen and bath facilities, located in the *least* expensive parts of counties. This will make it possible for homeless people to be relocated to safe shelter immediately, instead of having to wait until tax subsidized developers build them “supportive housing” at a cost of \$500,000 per unit (or more). Any politician that runs for office that does not commit to overturning or dramatically clarifying the *Jones* ruling does not care about the homeless and is not serious about solving the problem.

2 – Revise the Lanterman-Petris-Short Act of 1967 that made it nearly impossible to incarcerate the mentally ill. It is not compassionate, nor is it a constitutional obligation, to permit someone who is obviously deranged to live on the streets where they are easy prey for criminals and perpetually tormented by mental illness. At the very least, these victims need to be taken off the streets and moved to facilities where they can be observed and treated if necessary. If they are not found to be seriously mentally ill, they can be placed in inexpensive shelters.

3 – Sponsor a referendum on Prop. 47 which downgraded drug and property crimes. It is absolutely impossible to police California’s streets if criminals are allowed to steal up to \$950 of property every day, and never face more than a misdemeanor charge. Similarly, it is a recipe for chaos to tolerate public consumption of opiates and amphetamines and other hard drugs. Conservatives must emphasize that it is not compassionate to allow people to descend into the hell of addiction, and when drug addicts move into public spaces and become disruptive, it is reasonable to arrest them.

It is important to emphasize that California’s homeless problem will be significantly reduced if the supply of housing is increased and appropriate penalties are restored for vagrancy, petty theft and possession of hard drugs. Once housing is more affordable and once the “will not” contingent of homeless realize the party is over, California’s population of unsheltered homeless will become manageable. They can then be helped in facilities built in inexpensive areas, so that all of them can be accommodated, and the money that is saved can be used to treat their substance abuse, their mental illness, and provide job training.

Solving the Problem of Wildfires

There are a lot of issues that matter very much to *some* Californians, but the choice of issues here are those that matter very much to *all* Californians. Another example of such an issue is prevention of wildfires. This issue – how to prevent catastrophic wildfires – like all those already mentioned, has an obvious solution. And as with the other issues, there are powerful special interests that don’t want anything to change.

The problem is we have become expert at fire suppression, at the same time as we’ve reduced our timber industry to a fraction of its former size. The result are overgrown, stressed, tinder dry forests. The solution to preventing catastrophic wildfires, at least in California’s conifer forests where most wildfires occur, is to revive the timber industry. Modern logging practices do not destroy forest ecosystems, and in fact can be beneficial to the ecosystems. California’s timber industry needs to expand from the current annual harvest of 1.5 billion board feet to 4.5 billion board feet.

If the size of California’s timber industry were tripled, the amount of wood being harvested from the forests would almost be equal to the rate at which the forests grow each year. Using a mix of clear cutting on a 50 to 100 year rotation, combined with so-called “uneven age management” in more sensitive areas in order to preserve important groves and other valuable ecosystems, California’s overgrown forests could be quickly restored to health. There are many benefits to such a transformation:

1 – The clear cut areas, never more than 1-2 percent of the forests, would provide temporary meadow which actually helps wildlife populations.

2 – The logged areas are immediately mulched with new trees planted in furrows that follow the elevation contours, meaning all storm runoff percolates into the aquifers.

3 – The properly thinned forests no longer use up all the precipitation. Currently, the trees in California’s overgrown forests drink all the rain, often allowing none of it to run into the streams or percolate into the aquifers, and they’re so dense they’re often stressed and dying anyway. If California’s forests were thinned down to healthy historical norms, millions of acre feet per year would be added to California’s water supply.

4 – The timber companies, at their expense, will thin the forests, maintain the logging roads which are also fire breaks and used by firefighting crews, and cut away trees and brush that encroach on power lines. Currently all of those roads, fire breaks, and transmission corridors are overgrown because the timber companies have been chased out and there aren’t funds to do this maintenance from any other sources.

5 – Thousands of good jobs will be created, and instead of costing taxpayers money, it will generate tax revenue.

California’s fire seasons exemplify much of the political dysfunction that grips the state. And confronting the special interests that prevent progress does not require denying the values that these special interests have used for years to maintain their credibility with voters. It doesn’t harm the forests to bring back logging. Wildlife biologists have argued the exact opposite, that modern logging will save the forests, not only from wildfires that literally threaten to obliterate California’s overgrown forests, but even by revitalizing the ecosystems so wildlife can thrive.

The Coalition that Conservatives Can Build If They Offer Bold Solutions

This theme, that we want the same things the progressive liberals say they want but have failed to provide, offers conservatives power and credibility that money can’t buy. By not only identifying the failures of the ruling liberal establishment, but by taking on the exact same challenges and offering practical, obvious solutions, conservatives can build a populist supermajority in California.

Imagine the excitement that candidates can generate when they announce their commitment to legislation *and* ballot initiatives that will solve the biggest bipartisan challenges facing Californians. School vouchers will liberate millions of school children from a failing public school system that is under nearly monopoly control of the teachers’ unions. Overnight, competitive schools will be opened, offering a diversity of programs so that every parent has the freedom to choose a curriculum that will maximize the chances for their children to learn and have a bright future. Parents that homeschool or form micro-schools will get reimbursed, making that option feasible for far more parents. Private schools as well will thrive, as parents who couldn’t previously afford the quality of a private school will now have that opportunity.

Imagine the enthusiasm that will greet a serious proposal to create water abundance in California. \$50 billion in general obligation bonds is plenty of money to increase California’s annual water supply by 5 million acre feet, since additional financing could come from revenue bonds attached to the ratepayers who would purchase the water, along with federal assistance. Imagine the relief Californians will feel when electricity

bills stop rising inexorably to keep pace with renewable portfolio mandates, simply because Diablo Canyon stayed open, we didn't destroy our natural gas infrastructure, and renewable electricity producers had to price the cost to provide *continuous* power into their contracts with the utilities. Imagine being able to drive safely up and down California's widened and resurfaced freeways for less cost than what was proposed to be squandered on the bullet train.

It gets better. Imagine being able to afford homes again. Imagine that anyone with a decent job could once again afford to purchase a new home on a spacious lot, instead being a mortgage slave merely to own an overpriced home on a lot so small you can't fit a swing set or trampoline in the back yard. Imagine new cities and suburbs up and down Interstate 5 and Highway 101. Imagine all those beautiful residential suburbs spared the divisive stress of having multi-story, multi-family, tax subsidized apartment buildings sprinkled randomly into the neighborhoods to house people who in a fair society could find a job and buy a home of their own.

And better still, imagine homeless drug addicts and alcoholics getting treated in facilities that are safe and inexpensive, instead of being allowed to destroy their lives while eating in shelters nestled in the middle of beachfront communities where people work like hell to pay their mortgages. Imagine the mentally ill taken off the streets and given treatment. Imagine California's neighborhoods, parks, shopping districts, public squares, transit systems, sidewalks, alleys, underpasses and beaches given back to the local residents, shoppers and tourists.

And finally, imagine a state where a revived timber industry along with streamlined procedures for controlled burns and building firebreaks and removing biomass means a state where the air isn't fouled for weeks on end every summer, as cataclysmic infernos drive thousands from their homes and rack up billions in damages.

This is an agenda that will attract every parent of a K-12 student in California. It will attract business and labor interests who want the economic growth. It will attract every family that wants to live in a home with a yard without having to go broke to do it. It will attract every person who doesn't want to live with water rationing, or unreliable and expensive electricity, or endure clogged freeways. It will appeal to homeless advocates, if they're honest about what needs to be done, and it will gain the passionate support of every resident of every community currently besieged by homeless encampments.

This agenda is not ideological, it is practical. It mingles libertarian solutions, such as using the private timber industry to solve the problem of forest fires, with government solutions, such as issuing general obligation bonds to guarantee abundant water. While it is certain to enrage some environmentalists, others will acknowledge key facts in favor of this agenda: new suburbs in the age of electric cars and telecommuting do not cause climate change, nor does nuclear power, there is plenty of open space in California to accommodate a few thousand additional square miles of urban civilization, timber extraction is the only practical way to thin overgrown forests and hence save them, and abundant water means, for example, we

can refill the Salton Sea, we can send bigger freshwater pulses down the rivers and through the delta, and we can replenish our aquifers.

The biggest foes of this agenda will be the teachers' unions. Good. Make the fight about this fearsome gang of leftist agitators who care more about indoctrinating children to harbor racial resentment than about encouraging them to take individual responsibility for their lives. The California Teachers Association is the most powerful political special interest in California, although in recent years the leftist billionaires of Silicon Valley are challenging them for the top spot. But these tech billionaires can also be targets of this fight. Why are the Big Brother tech billionaires, along with the entire leftist establishment headed by the California Teachers Association – and the Sierra Club – being allowed by California's voters to do *everything wrong*?

Conservatives can offer freedom, enlightenment, prosperity, abundance, and safety – everything that progressive liberal ideology has taken away from Californians. They can adopt a platform that embraces school vouchers, infrastructure investment and practical approaches to water, energy and transportation challenges, regulatory reform to stimulate urban expansion and affordable new suburbs, sensible and cost-effective solutions to the homeless crisis, and a revitalized timber industry to curb the risk of wildfires and create thousands of jobs.

Conservatives can offer solutions. They can be bold. They can go on the attack, on behalf of all Californians. And they can *win*, to everyone's tremendous benefit.

This article first appeared in California Policy Center on December 22, 2020. Edward Ring is a contributing editor and senior fellow with the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. The California Policy Center is an educational non-profit focused on public policies that aim to improve California's democracy and economy. He is also a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness.

THE COALITION THAT WILL REALIGN CALIFORNIA BY EDWARD RING

What's happening in California today is bigger than Newsom's failures as a governor

Poor governance, beginning long before the bungled response to the COVID-19 pandemic, has led to a [recall campaign](#) that may very well put California Governor Newsom into a fight for his political life in the Spring of 2021. If a [suitable challenger](#) emerges to replace Newsom, he could end up in well

deserved political exile. But what's happening in California today is bigger than Newsom's failures as a governor, and it's bigger than any single politician who may replace him.

Across several areas of policy, the Democratic party, led by Gavin Newsom, has not merely alienated, but enraged millions of Californians. The key to political realignment in California is not only to offer these groups a [political agenda](#) that incorporates solutions to all their grievances, but does so in a manner so coherent, so practical, and so promising, that a common solidarity is generated which transcends all the ways California's ruling class has thus far divided them.

The groups that can come together to transform California and change its political landscape fall into four obvious groups, with potential allies in other groups. The four core groups are parents of children going to public schools in low income communities, small business owners throughout California, residents of farming and logging communities, and religious conservatives who are mostly Christian but include Sikhs, Moslems, and others.

Grassroots opposition to Newsom's Democratic party in California is only consistently found among farming communities, small business owners, and religious conservatives. It's not enough to ever win a statewide contest. Hard core populist support for Democrats in California comes primarily from millions of white liberals, living in inherited homes, who pay minimal property taxes and are hence immune from the consequences of an out-of-control public sector bureaucracy, along with the government employees that work in that bureaucracy. The critical [swing constituency](#), currently solidly in the Democratic camp, are black, Latino, and Asian voters.

Guiding the agenda of California's Democrats are a ruling elite, small in number, but wielding incredible power. Among these elites are government union leaders, liberal billionaires from Hollywood to the Silicon Valley, extreme environmentalists, and the social justice vanguard. The money and influence these elites bring to California politics cannot possibly be matched by the opposition. But all the money in the world cannot make up for the fact that their policies have made life miserable for millions of ordinary Californians.

Unifying the Alienated Constituencies

Lowering the cost of housing and energy will have strong appeal to every Californian household that is at or below the median income. It will also appeal to small business owners who pay high rents, have high utility bills, and have to support a workforce that needs to afford California's high cost-of-living. For starters, this means keeping Diablo Canyon open, keeping California's natural gas grid intact, and requiring renewable electricity providers to guarantee an uninterrupted year-round supply of energy, and price those true costs into their competitive bids to the utilities. It also means reversing draconian zoning mandates that have drawn boundaries around California's urban areas and prevented them from growing outward.

School choice will appeal to California's approximately [4.0 million households](#) with school age children. School vouchers will have universal appeal among households at all income levels, since middle income homeowners that want to avoid public schools will no longer have to pay twice – once through property taxes for the public schools, then also via tuition for the private school. Needless to say, turning the entire public school system on its head and breaking the teachers' union monopoly would earn the enthusiastic support of religious conservatives, who are thoroughly fed up with some of the nonsense that passes for education in California's public schools.

Restoring appropriate laws to discourage public intoxication, petty theft and vagrancy, combined with spending public funds on cost-effective homeless shelters in less expensive parts of cities, could [end California's homeless crisis](#) in a few months. Californians living and suffering in the midst of this debacle only need to make their voices heard, and the inexplicable public support for idiots like the newly elected Los Angeles District Attorney [George Gascon](#) will evaporate overnight. California's farming and logging communities do not have the numerical clout of its small business community or its households with children, but the issues they are passionate about are issues that affect every Californian. Farmers [want more water](#). Loggers want to see a [revival of the timber industry](#). And the infrastructure projects necessary to create [water abundance](#) would benefit all Californians, just as the revival of the timber industry would thin the overgrown forests and prevent additional summers where half the state is blanketed in killer smoke.

A unifying political alternative to California's current Democratic agenda would borrow from what California's Democrats used to represent. Back in the Governor Pat Brown era, Democrats genuinely supported big infrastructure. They completed the most extensive system of dams and aqueducts in the world. They built a magnificent network of freeways. They built the finest public university in the world. And they did all of it cost-effectively and projects only took few years from concept to completion.

It will be interesting to see if the Biden presidency delivers on his campaign theme of "[Build Back Better](#)." Pragmatists in California, regardless of party, realize there could soon be a torrent of federal money coming into California. But where will it go? Will it repair the dams and aqueducts and build new ones? Will it resurface and widen the freeways? Or will it be used to prop up bloated public sector budgets and accomplish next to nothing?

Apart from federal pork, Californians who want to live in a business friendly, affordable state with good K-12 education options and responsible forest management probably cannot expect much from the Biden administration. But if Californians themselves demand these reforms, they can transform the

Democratic party, or destroy it, both in California and nationally.

In any case, it may not be Republicans that lead the political realignment of California. Any group of politicians that will express these reforms clearly and coherently can marshal a new and unbeatable coalition. Under the unifying theme of a pragmatic, comprehensive agenda, politicians can run without the support of any party and they can win. Build enabling infrastructure. Open up more land for residential and commercial development. Fix the schools. Thin the forests. Roll back overdone, punitive, job-killing regulations. Enforce necessary laws to preserve public order. Stand up to the fanatics and the opportunists that have been blocking these common sense measures for decades.

That message will attract a supermajority of California's voters. It is an inspiring agenda embracing optimism and hope, liberty and prosperity, and it benefits *everyone*.

[Edward Ring](#)

Edward Ring is a contributing editor and senior fellow with the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. The California Policy Center is an educational non-profit focused on public policies that aim to improve California's democracy and economy. He is also a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness.



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