



WEEKLY UPDATE
October 2 - 8, 2022



FALL MIXER 2022

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 20TH

5:30PM-7:30PM

THOUSAND HILLS RANCH
550 THOUSAND HILLS RD.
PISMO BEACH, CA

POSTPONED

APPETIZERS & BEVERAGES
WILL BE PROVIDED

ATTEND A BI-COUNTY PARTY OCT. 28
JOINT EVENT WITH COLAB SLO AND COLAB SANTA BARBARA
SPEND A FUN EVENING WITHOUT ISSUES
DETAILS BELOW

COLAB'S

Meet Me Halfway Is Back, Baby!

Friday, October 28, 2022

At the Santa Maria Fair Park

**Starring
Tammy Pescatelli**

Verbal Assassin



Includes
Steak Dinner by Testa Catering!
Hosted Bar!
and a Great Comedy Show!

*Reserve early
for best seats!*

\$1,250 for a table of 10 guests.

\$125 per person.

Reserve Tickets Online at www.colabsbc.org

Or by Mail at:

COLAB PO Box 7523 Santa Maria CA 93456

THIS WEEK

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DROUGHT RATIONING

**\$56.9 MILLION 3 YEAR UNION CONTRACT TO BE APPROVED
CAYUCOS VETERANS' HALL REBUILD GROWS TO \$11 MILLION
STARTED AT \$5 MILLION**

**STATE FORCES COUNTY TO BAN PLASTIC UNTENSILS,
CONDIMENT PACKS, DRINK STIRRERS, ETC.**



PLANNING DEPT – TOO MUCH WORK, NO STAFF

**\$70 MILLION DEBT ISSUANCE FOR NEW BUILDINGS
\$116 MILLION ALL IN WITH INTEREST
HOPE THEY CAN HEAT & LIGHT THEM**

SLOCOG

**ANOTHER GOVT FETISH - MORE BROADBAND STUDIES
WILL IT REALLY HELP YOUR KID WITH CALCULUS OR JUST
VIDEO GAMES?**

**CENTRAL COAST ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE CHARGING STUDY
THERE IS PROBABLY A REASON WHY THE PRIVATE SECTOR
HASN'T RUSHED TO PUT THEM IN**

**IS THERE ANYWHERE WE CAN BUILD HOUSING?
GIVEN THE LACK OF WATER & INFRASTRUTURE
YET ANOTHER STUDY**

**SLOCOG BOARD TO REAFFIRM STACK & PACK HOUSING POLICY
70% OF FUTURE HOMES ATTACHED OR ON SMALL LOTS NEXT TO THE BUS**

LAST WEEK

SLO COUNTY PENSION TRUST
PERSISTANT DOWN MARKETS REDUCE RETURNS

**STAFF RECOMMENDS NOT PRIORITIZING SOCIAL EQUITY AND
CLIMATE HYSTERIA IN INVESTMENT CRITERIA**

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
CITIZENS HOMELESS ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION APPOINTED

FY 2021-22 YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT
They are rolling in cash but are going to need it

**RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND STAFF VACANCIES
GROW TO RECORD LEVELS**

CANNABIS GROW DENIED 5/0 NEAR OAK SHORES

**DISTRICTING LAWSUIT ON EXEC SESSION - WHAT'S HAPPENED?
COURT DOCKET SHOWS NO ACTION**

**PG&E PRESENTS DIABLO RETENTION ISSUES
GOING DOWN BOTH PATHS – CLOSURE AND EXTENSION
SIMULTANEOUSLY**

APCD
LITE HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS & PATRONAGE GIVEAWAYS
SLO COUNCILWOMAN MARX CHASTISES PESCHONG

EMERGENT ISSUES

HEALTH DEPT CHANGES COVID REPORT FOCUS
ENDS USEFUL ROLLING INFECTION RATE DATA

**WHAT IS COUNTY'S OFFICIAL POSITION ON VACCINE
SIDE EFFECTS?
IT'S TIME FOR A REPORT ON THE IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL
CANNABIS**

**NEW STATE LAW ELIMINATES CEQA ON UNIVERSITY
HOUSING PROJECTS**

**COLAB IN DEPTH
SEE PAGE 30**

**THE POMPOUS PLEDGE TO CRASH THE GRID
BY ANDY CALDWELL**

THE THINNEST VENEER OF CIVILIZATION
*We are in a great experiment in which regressive progressivism discounts all the
institutions and methodologies of the past that have guaranteed a safe, affluent
and well fed America*
BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

THE STATE OF DREAMS
Every utopia is a dystopia. Especially California.
BY DANIEL GREENFIELD

**THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS
ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, October 4, 2022 (Scheduled)

**Item1 - Request to receive and file a 60-day update on current drought conditions and
related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the July 13,**

2021, proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. The Board letter states in part:

Request to receive and file a 60-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board’s review of the continuing need for the July 13, 2021, proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630.

AND

The U.S. Drought Monitor report released September 13, 2022, indicates that the drought change level for the county has not changed for our County from the last update provided on August 9, 2022. Local reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity for this time of year, including: Nacimiento 19% Page 3 of 6 (-5%); Lopez 24% (-2.3%); Salinas 52.4% (-4.6%); and Whale Rock 73% (-1%)¹.

As we enter the fall months, we will start to see measurable rainfall. The San Luis Reservoir² is currently at 27% (-9%) capacity. The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) continues to take a conservative approach for State Water (SWP) “Table A”³ allocations of 5% for 2022. This will not impact the District’s ability to deliver the requested State water for 2022 to the subcontractors.

State Water Allocations

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
5%	20%	60%	85%	35%	75%	20%	5%	5%

The drought is expected to continue through the winter and spring. New wells are restricted, and various jurisdictions are imposing increased water rationing, including fines for those who exceed the limits.

This is emblematic of the total failure of the State and localities to provide a fundamental government service. Relatedly, see the article, *State of Dreams*, on page 34 below.

Item 10 - Request to A) adopt a resolution approving the July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025, Memoranda of Understanding between the County of San Luis Obispo and the San Luis Obispo County Employees’ Association, (SLOCEA) Bargaining Unit 01 – Public Services Unit, Bargaining Unit 02 – Trades, Crafts & Services Unit, Bargaining Unit 05 – Supervisory Unit, and Bargaining Unit 13 – Clerical Unit; and B) approve amendments to the San Luis Obispo County Employees Retirement Plan Appendices. SLOCEA is the County’s largest union, representing about 1500 employees currently. As a result of State mandated collective bargaining, the Board is adopting a 3-year contract with costs, as displayed in the table below.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The increased costs associated with the provisions of the new MOUs as compared to current year expenses are shown in the table below.

Totals	Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Annualized Cost	Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Annualized Cost	Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Annualized Cost	Annual Ongoing Cost
Wages	\$8,522,825	\$18,100,073	\$22,525,949	\$22,525,949
Health	\$329,490	\$888,480	\$1,445,378	\$1,772,777
Pension	\$1,252,195	\$1,289,760	\$1,328,265	\$1,328,265
Standby, Bilingual, CDL, Uniforms, Jail/PHF/Juvenile Hall Differential, & Summer Childcare Scholarship	\$437,799	\$437,799	\$437,799	\$437,799
Total Costs	\$10,542,309	\$20,716,112	\$25,737,391	\$26,064,790

For whatever reason, some groups were left out of the original presentation for this item. Thus, it has been updated to include them.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The increased costs associated with the provisions of the new MOUs as compared to current year expenses are shown in the table below.

Totals	Fiscal Year 2022-23 Annualized Cost	Fiscal Year 2023-24 Annualized Cost	Fiscal Year 2024-25 Annualized Cost	Annual Ongoing Cost
Wages	\$11,396,402	\$18,100,073	\$22,525,949	\$22,525,949
Health	\$329,490	\$888,480	\$1,445,378	\$1,772,777
Pension	\$1,252,195	\$1,289,760	\$1,328,265	\$1,328,265
Standby, Bilingual, CDL, Uniforms, Jail/PHF/Juvenile Hall Differential, & Summer Childcare Scholarship	\$437,799	\$437,799	\$437,799	\$437,799
Total Costs	\$13,415,886	\$20,716,112	\$25,737,391	\$26,064,790

The Staff anticipates that vacancies and some unbudgeted revenue growth will cover the costs for this fiscal year. The \$13.4 million in the first year is unbudgeted, and staff anticipates that it will be covered by funds accumulated due to employee vacancies and unanticipated revenues – a pretty big roll of the dice.

Departmental savings and/or unanticipated revenue will be the primary source of funding for unbudgeted expenditures associated with the compensation increases. To the extent departmental savings are not available to cover the amount, staff will recommend that your Board authorize a transfer of the deficit amount out of the General Fund Contingencies to the departments’ operating budgets, as needed, as part of the third quarter report. The third quarter is when many such year-end adjustments are made.

Item 14 - Request to: 1) accept a total of \$4,795,926 in grant and donations from several sources for construction of the Cayucos Veteran’s Memorial Hall Rehabilitation Project; and 2) authorize a budget adjustment in the amount of \$5,281,095 to increase appropriations: \$5,045,926 in Capital Outlay, \$35,000 in Issuance Costs, and \$200,169, in Internal Loan Principal Repayment to FC 268 – Tax Reduction Reserve Fund in Fund Center (FC) 230 - Capital Projects Fund, WBS# 320089 – Cayucos Veteran's Hall, by decreasing Tax Reduction Reserve Fund Loans by \$3,349,831; and increasing \$3,535,000 of bond proceeds from the Public Financing Authority, \$3,550,250 of State Grant Aid, \$435,676 in community donations, \$60,000 in nongovernmental grants, \$1,000,000 of State Veterans Affairs funding, and \$50,000 from District 2 Community Project Funds - FC 106, by 4/5 vote; 3) submit a bid opening report for construction of the Cayucos Veteran’s Memorial Hall Rehabilitation Project; to award the subject contract (Clerk’s File) to JG Contracting, Inc., in the amount of \$8,560,000; and 4) authorize the Director of Public Works, or designee, to approve change orders for a contingency amount up to \$856,000 for a potential final total construction amount of \$9,416,000. District 2. After various fits and starts, the County has cobbled together the funding to rebuild the oceanfront Cayucos Veteran’s Memorial Hall, which serves as a major focal point for the community as well as serving as a venue for wedding receptions and other events on a fee basis.

Over several years, what was estimated to be a \$5 million dollar project has grown to \$11 million.

Table 1 - Proposed Project Funding			
Funding Source	Current Funding	Augmentation	Total Proposed Funding
CA Natural Resources Agency (CCNR) Grant Award Augmentation	\$1,937,000	\$2,500,000	\$4,437,000
State Coastal Conservancy (SCC) Grant Award Augmentation**	0	345,000	345,000
CA State Parks Locally-Operated State Parks (LOSPP) Grant Award	0	705,250	705,250
Sub-Total, State Grant Awards	\$1,937,000	\$3,550,250	\$5,487,250
General Fund	\$471,600	\$0	\$471,600
Decrease/Return Tax Reduction Reserve Fund (TRRF)	3,550,000	(3,550,000)	\$0
Bond Proceeds	0	3,535,000	3,535,000
CA State Budget Appropriations - Veterans Affairs	0	1,000,000	1,000,000
Community Business Improvement District (CBID)*	0	60,000	60,000
Restore Cayucos Vets Hall Community Donations Fund	0	435,676	435,676
District 2 Community Project Funds	0	50,000	50,000
Total Funding:	\$5,958,600	\$5,080,926	\$11,039,526

* Application pending - Award not issued

** SCC Grant - Initial \$300,000 was previously awarded & accepted by BOS on 03/01/2022, but not yet budgeted.

At time of bid, the project had a budgeted of \$4.5 million for the construction contract so awarding a contract in the amount of \$8,560,000 was not feasible. Since that time, staff has worked to secure additional project funding from various sources to augment the project budget sufficiently to be able to move forward with award of the construction contract.



In view of sea level rise, should the County expend \$11 million on this project? After all, the Coastal Commission is beating everyone’s brains out to prohibit both new and rehab development on the coast.

If private citizens attempt to fix their steps to the beach they are put through hell.

Item 15 - Submittal of a resolution authorizing the County Public Health Department, Environmental Health Services Division as the enforcement agency for Assembly Bill 1276 Single-Use Foodware Accessories and Condiments regulations within the County unincorporated area. In another blatantly woke and ridiculous imposition, the County must gear up to enforce a new State law prohibiting food restaurants, coffee shops, and other businesses from using “single use foodware” means:

Sec. 2. 42270 – new definitions (e) “Single-use foodware accessory” means all of the following single-use items provided alongside ready-to-eat food:

- 1. Utensils, which is defined as forks, knives, spoons, and sporks*
- 2. Chopsticks*
- 3. Condiment cups and packets*
- 4. Straws*
- 5. Stirrers*
- 6. Splash sticks*
- 7. Cocktail sticks*

(f) “Standard Condiment” means relishes, spices, sauces, confections, or seasoning that require no additional preparation and that are usually used on a food item after preparation, including ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, soy sauce, hot sauce, salsa, salt pepper, sugar, and sugar substitutes.

Sec.3. 42271 In order to reduce the amount of waste created from single-use items the retail food industry is now required to:

- 1. Only provide single-use accessories to consumers upon request*
- 2. Only provide single-use accessories required to eat the ready-to-eat food*
- 3. No bundling of single-use accessories or condiments*
- 4. Only offer those single-use items needed to eat or prevent spillage of the ready-to-eat food at a drive-through as well as in a public use airport*
- 5. A third-party delivery platform shall provide consumers with the option to request single use accessories*
- 6. A food facility that uses a third-party platform shall customize their menu with a list of available single-use accessories or condiment. Only those items chosen by the consumer will be delivered. If no single-use accessories or condiments are requested none will be provided*
- 7. Unwrapped single-use foodware accessories that are self-serve, standard condiments that are self-serve, and/or bulk dispensed condiments may still be used*

Sec. 4. 42272 1. A city, county, or city and county have until June 1, 2022 to authorize an enforcement agency for the law 2. First and second violations results in a notice of violation, any additional violation carry a \$25 fine not to exceed \$300 annually

This yet another fake virtue signaling imposition based on the theory that elimination of plastic forks, single use spice packets, chopsticks, etc., will lower CO₂ emissions. AB 1276 provides no information on how many metric tons of CO₂ will be reduced.

How much will it cost Moe’s Barbeque down the street from the County building to bring back metal utensils, multi-use condiment dispensers, and china plates? Will they have to hire more dishwashers?



Will the one-time plastic containers have to go? The red plastic baskets are reusable, but will they eventually be banned as well? Will the County or the cities be the enforcement authority within the incorporated cities? Don't the DA and police have better things to do than enforce this ridiculous piece of absurdity?



Oh well, Back to Medieval Sanitation

Item 23 - Request to 1) receive and file a report on Department of Planning and Building Activities and provide staff direction as necessary on the Department Tiered Priority Projects; and 2) receive and file the Annual General Plan Progress Report. This item requests the Board to examine the Planning Department's workload and then to adopt a policy about regarding which long-range management projects should receive priority now and in the upcoming fiscal year.

The item notes that the Department has significant staff vacancies, which restricts its ability both to process ongoing permits and to conduct studies and policy document revisions required by the State and/or Board of Supervisors.

Department Staffing The Department has faced challenges with staffing certain service areas this past fiscal year which has led to longer response and processing times on some building and land use permits. The impacts were due to the separations of tenured staff and the hiring of new staff that needed to be trained. The turnover rate for fiscal year 2020-2021 was 21.4% with 22 employee separations. The turnover rate for fiscal year 2021-2022 decreased to 9.95% with 12 employee separations. The decrease in turnover can be attributed to engagement work with

County Human Resources Department Leadership and the Centre for Organizational Effectiveness.

Table 1: Tier I Priority Projects Completed in 2022

Case #	Tier I Project	Completion Date
LRP2021-00007	Williamson Act Rules of Procedure Streamlining	Completed in FY 21-22
LRP2021-00009	Workforce Housing Subdivision Ordinance Extension	Completed in FY 21-22
LRP2022-00003	Inclusionary Housing Ordinance Repeal	Completed in FY 21-22
N/A	Remove ADU Deed Restrictions	Completed in FY 21-22
LRP2020-00005	Los Osos Vacation Rental Ordinance - Local Coastal Plan Amendment	Completed in FY 22-23
LRP2022-00007	Paso Basin Agricultural Offset Ordinance Extension	Completed in FY 22-23
LRP2021-00001	Paso Basin Planting Ordinance	FY 22-23, Q2
N/A	2022 Building Code Changes	FY 22-23, Q2
LRP2022-00005	Pre-Approved ADU Plans	FY 22-23, Q3

Table 2: Long Range Planning Work Program Fiscal Year 2023-24

Case #	Tier I Project	Target Completion Date
LRP2013-00001	Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan	FY 23-24, Q1
LRP2017-00001	ADU Ordinance - LCP Amendment	FY 23-24, Q1
LRP2017-00002	Agricultural Worker Housing Ordinance - LCP Amendment	FY 23-24, Q1
LRP2018-00011	Density Bonus Ordinance - LCP Amendment	FY 23-24, Q1
LRP2020-00007	Dana Reserve Specific Plan	FY 23-24, Q1
LRP2011-00016	Los Osos Community Plan - LCP Amendment	FY 23-24, Q4
N/A	2023 Annual Ordinance Clean-up Package	FY 23-24, Q4
LRP2015-00018	Avila Community Plan Update	FY 25-26, Q1

Table 3: Tier II Priority Project List with Staff Recommendation to Remove or Keep

Tier II Priority Project	Staff Recommendation
Cannabis Advisory Council	Remove. Received no votes from supervisors during the November 16, 2021 priorities report.
Cannabis Ordinance Program EIR	Remove. Received no votes from supervisors during the November 16, 2021 priorities report.
No Camping on Public Lands	Remove. As presented by staff during the November 16, 2021 priorities report, County Counsel determined this project falls within the purview of the Sheriff and Real Property Services.
Vacation Rental Ordinance - "use it or lose it" provision	Remove. This initiative will be accomplished through amendments to Title 6, Business Licensees and Regulations, led by the Auditor Controller Treasurer Tax Collector's (ACTTC) in consultation with the Department and County Counsel.
California Valley Land Acquisition Program	Remove. Put on hold until additional funds are sourced to implement the program.

Inland Vacation Rental Ordinance	Remove. Received no votes from supervisors during the November 16, 2021 priorities report.
Temporary Events Ordinance	Remove. Received no votes from supervisors during the November 16, 2021 priorities report.
Urban Small Wineries	Remove. Included in 2023 Ordinance Clean-up Package.
Distilleries Ordinance	Remove. Included in 2023 Ordinance Clean-up Package.
Cannabis Ordinance – 5 Years at Operation	Remove. Included in 2023 Ordinance Clean-up Package.
Airport Review (AR) Combining Designation	Remove. Included in 2023 Ordinance Clean-up Package.
Mineral Resource Area (MRA) Combining Designation	Remove. Included in 2023 Ordinance Clean-up Package.
Dark Skies Ordinance	Keep on Tier II list until resources are allocated.
Rural Camping Ordinance	Keep on Tier II list until resources are allocated.
Guest Ranch to Dude Ranch Change	Keep on Tier II list until resources are allocated.
Safety Element Update	Keep on Tier II list until resources are allocated.

Project	Description
Accessory Storage Ordinance – Recreational Vehicle and Equipment	On July 19, 2022, the Board directed the Department to add a potential new priority project to further limit the number of recreational vehicles (RVs) that can be stored on parcels in the Agriculture, Rural Lands, and Residential Rural land use categories. Currently, Land Use Ordinance Section 22.30.040.E.1.b allows up to 10 RVs to be stored on parcels in these land use categories when such vehicles are the personal property of residents of the site. The Board directed the Department to consider a new priority project to amend this section to reduce the maximum number of RVs that can be stored on parcels in the identified land use categories.

There is considerable interest by the public, which hopes that work on a rural camping ordinance could be expedited. Perhaps the Board could get some bids and contract this project out to a private sector planning firm.

Big Picture

The State and the localities have made the land use process so complex, time consuming, and expensive that most jurisdictions have similar struggles. Remember that the real purpose is to cripple business and private property in order to bring on an economic collapse and establish a fascist socialist state controlled by the woke elite. It appears we are well on our way.

Item 24 - It is recommended that the Board adopt the attached resolution, by 4/5 vote, to:

A. authorize the issuance of the Authority’s the issuance of 2022A (Tax-Exempt) and 2022B (Taxable) Lease Revenue Bonds to finance acquisition and construction of a Co-Located Dispatch Facility and a New Probation Department Building and rehabilitation of Cayucos Veterans Hall, and related improvements;

B. authorize the refunding of the Authority’s Lease Revenue Refunding Bonds, 2012 Series A (New Government Center and Dairy Creek Golf), through authorization to issue of 2022A (Tax-Exempt) Lease Revenue Refunding Bonds for debt service savings;

C. Approve the form, terms, and provisions of documents associated with the financing and refunding;

D. confirm the selection and appointment of bond counsel, disclosure counsel, municipal advisor and underwriter; and

E. Authorize the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors, County Administrative Officer, Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax-Collector-Public Administrator and other County officers and representatives to finalize and execute all documents.

Per earlier preliminary authorization, the staff is submitting a debt funding package for capital building improvements including:

New Co-Located Public Safety Communications and Dispatch Center (Sheriff, Fire, and Ambulance) - \$30 million.

New Probation Department Building - \$36 million

Cayucos Veterans Hall Reconstruction - \$3.5 million (As part of a total \$11 million project - see item 14 above for details)

The annual debt service is estimated to be \$4.64 million per year, which will be an obligation of the general fund. It appears that these are 25-year bonds. Thus, the full cost would be \$116 million for the \$70 million borrowing.

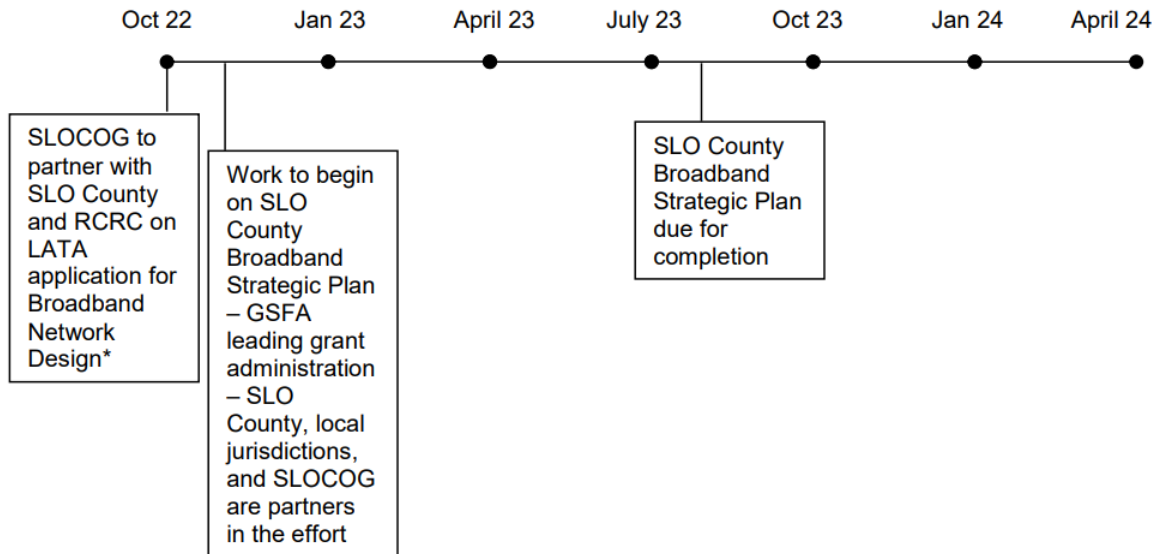
The issuance will also contain a \$7.5 million or refunding remaining debt on the Dairy Creek Golf Course and the County Administration Building. The staff estimates that this will save \$400,000 per year over the remaining term of the original bonds (for the Administration Building and \$292,000 for the golf course).

Given increased cost for labor contracts, pension costs, and inflation, the County budget will be tight.

SLO County Council of Governments (SLOCOG) Meeting of Wednesday, October7, 2022 (Scheduled)

Item D-3: More Broadband Planning. Governments at all levels believe that improving broadband service for the poor and those with bad reception in rural areas will improve their education and awareness. Accordingly, SLOCOG and the County are jointly working on a \$2.7 million Broadband Strategic Plan. The write-up does not state what problem the plan is supposed to cure or how it might contribute to some future effort.

Projected Broadband Timeline:



Many local entrepreneurs have already solved this problem by placing repeaters on area mountain tops which receive feed from the major providers. This is then beamed to a local area and distributed by a repeater to subcarriers in the neighborhood. The service is fast and personal. The local company installs and maintains the equipment. It is not like having to struggle with Sprint or Verizon on the phone. Why not encourage the private sector to do this?

Will faster video gaming help increase math scores? The spread of TV since 1950 does not seem to have helped.

Item F-2: Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle (CCEVS) Strategy. The \$200,000 effort is summarized as:

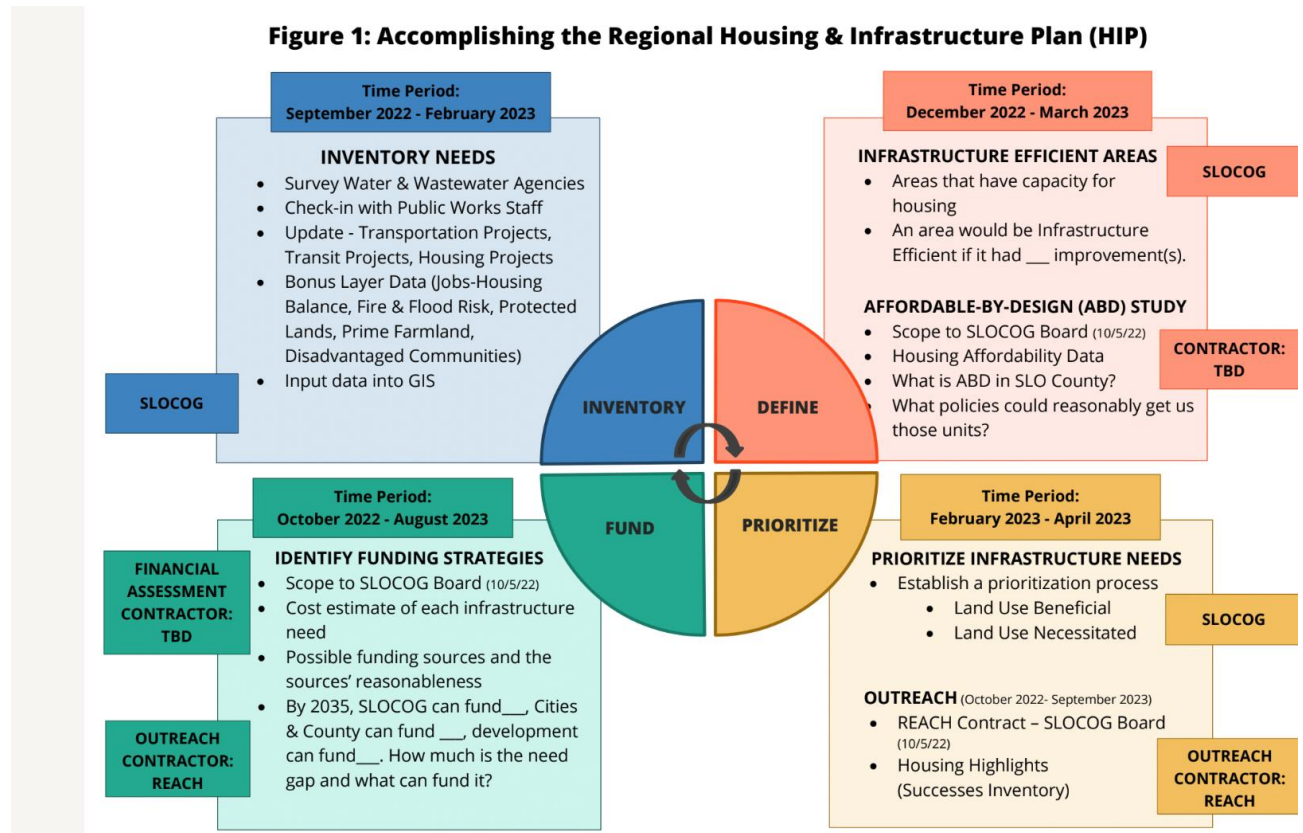
Project Description The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG), San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), and Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) have partnered to develop a Central Coast Zero Emission Vehicle Strategy (CCZEVS) that will identify electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure needs in the Central Coast Counties (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito) as well as Ventura County. The goal of this effort is to identify future charging infrastructure siting and technology needs to accommodate future travel demand specifically for interregional motorists, regional transit services and freight. A key emphasis will be on addressing the region's electromobility needs for accommodating intercity travel within the less developed unincorporated areas of the Central Coast and underserved populations, such as disadvantaged communities and residents of multi-family dwelling units.

Again, once they start deploying the equipment, who is going to maintain them, clean up the area, prevent crime, etc.? The State can't even maintain the rest areas, which are filthy and often closed. What about vandalism of the EV chargers? Perhaps the State would allow Chevron to sell both gas and EV energy?

Item F-3: Regional Housing & Infrastructure Plan (HIP) Update. How many times over the decades have we done this one?

SUMMARY The purpose of the Regional Housing & Infrastructure Plan (HIP) is to inventory infrastructure barriers to housing, identify funding to implement infrastructure needs, and develop foundational information for the future 2027 Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). This collaborative approach between the eight jurisdictions continues the efforts in creating a focused strategy that addresses the regional housing and infrastructure shortage. The SB 2 grant, which funds the HIP, expires in September 2023.

Another big honking process:



Then what?

Item F-4: Regional Transportation Plan Development. The essential component is the selection of the type of housing that will be preferred. At this point, the Board is being asked to confirm its prior adopted preference that homes be smaller addends located next to transportation facilities.

Scenario C: Transportation Efficiency Analysis Scenario This scenario is inclusive of the Transportation Efficiency Analysis (TEA). The TEA identifies transportation efficient and potentially efficient areas by locating areas with sufficient access to interchanges, bikeways, and transit. The criteria used to consider an area transportation efficient includes locations within a

1/2 mile from transit stop, 1/2 mile from a bikeway, and 1 mile from an interchange. If an area had all three, it was considered transportation efficient and displayed in green on Figure 2. If an area has 1 or 2 transportation access factors, the area was considered potentially efficient and are displayed in yellow (for 2 factors) and red (for 1 factor-nots how below). If an area did not have any transportation access factors, it is considered transportation inefficient. This scenario initially guided new housing in transportation efficient (green) or potentially efficient (yellow) areas with the distribution of 30% larger-lot homes and 70% smaller-lot homes, but due to the nature of the TEA locations, the amount of smaller-lot housing increased.

Figure 2: Transportation Efficiency Heat Map



The map key demonstrates how little land area will be available under this policy when compared with the huge 3200 sq. mile County.

LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

SLO Pension Trust Meeting of Monday, September 26, 2022 (Completed)

Item 14 - Monthly Investment Report. Thus far this year the return is a negative 9.6%. The staff warns that: *As of September 19th, the month has had volatile but negative returns.*

♣ Equity Markets – The pronounced bear market through much of 2022 experienced a July “Bear Market Rally” which reversed itself in August. Concerns over continued Fed tightening of monetary conditions with a possible recession being triggered weigh heavily on the equity market’s view of future corporate profitability. The S&P 500 index finished August with a YTD return of -16.1%.

The Fed did in fact raise the discount rate. As of Friday, September 23, 2022, the Dow fell to a ten-year low of 29,264.43. Should these numbers persist until the end of the year, the Board of Supervisors should plan for higher contribution rates next fiscal year.

Agenda Item 14: Monthly Investment Report for August 2022

	August	Year to Date 2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Total Trust Investments (\$ millions)	\$1,645		\$1,775	\$1,552 year end	\$1,446 year end	\$1,285 year end	\$1,351 year end
Total Fund Return	-1.9% Gross	-7.5% Gross	15.2% Gross	8.9 % Gross	16.3 % Gross	-3.2 % Gross	15.5 % Gross
Policy Index Return (r)	-2.6%	-9.6%	12.8%	10.0 %	16.4 %	-3.2 %	13.4 %

Item 21 - Agenda Item 27: Fiduciary Refresher Briefing – Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) Criteria in Investments. The item contained a presentation and discussion of the whole progressive push to include ESG criteria in investments. Staff and consultants recommend the prudent view that there are many risks, including ESG, which must be considered. No one factor should be given special weighting.

No single risk factor dominates an investment decision



Risks are not without opportunity, and investors are expected to be compensated for taking on risk

Source – Colorado PERA 2022 Investment Stewardship Report

When the above graphic is viewed with ESG Investment Criteria in mind one can see that ESG factors are part of many of these identified risk factors – Biological, Economic, Geopolitical, Supply Chain, Regulatory, Climate, and Reputational. Food for thought.

Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, September 27, 2022 (Completed)

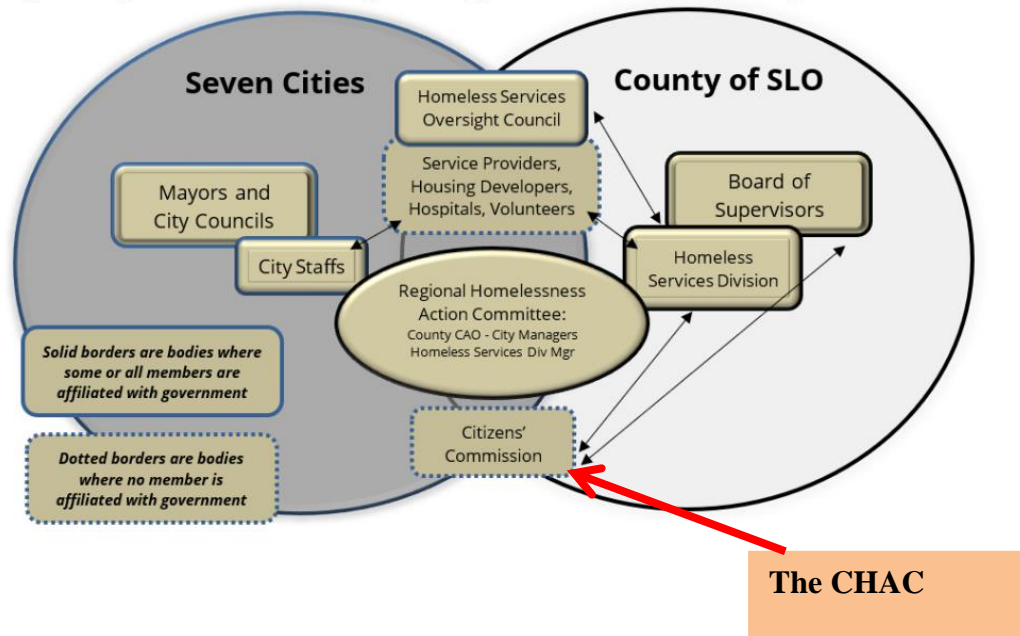
Item 5 - Request to 1) adopt a resolution establishing the Citizens' Homelessness Accountability Commission (CHAC); and 2) approve the proposed bylaws for the CHAC; and 3) approve a by-name list for CHAC membership. The Board approved the appointments. There was no controversy .

This item is another structural step in the implementation of the County's new plan to reduce and prevent homelessness. Per the chart below, the CHAC is one of the coordinating committees being established. Its key role is to evaluate the progress of the overall program. The write-up states in part:

*The CHAC is a proposed group of citizen volunteers who will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors to represent our countywide region in closely monitoring the progress of The San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to 5 Address Homelessness 2022-2027 over the next five years. Subcommittees from this panel will interact directly with the Homeless Services Division on quarterly basis and the full committee will interact with Board of Supervisors annually. **The intent is to establish a panel of citizens, operating with independence from government perspectives and processes,** to be authorized access, input, and evaluation of the Countywide*

Plan as it unfolds, while also reporting out to the public regarding their evaluation in an independent manner. Because the Board of Supervisors is formally establishing the CHAC, it is subject to the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act, among other things.

Figure 1. Diagram demonstrating the Regionalism Approach of *The San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness*



Attachment 3

Membership Nomination for Citizens' Accountability Homelessness Commission

1. Greg Gillett
2. Sam Blakeslee
3. Laura Slaughter
4. Jim Salio
5. Mike Drazo
6. Chuck Davison
7. Justin Davis
8. Christine Thornburg
9. Helene Finger
10. Christine Robertson
11. Rick Bravo

Item 7 - It is recommended that the Board approve a resolution adopting final appropriations, reserves, designations, and contingencies for FY 2022-23 pursuant to direction given in Board Resolution No. 2022-153 and relative to the determination of the June 30, 2022, final fund balances, by 4/5th vote. The FY 2021-22 fiscal year ended with a fund balance \$15.2 million higher than was budgeted. Prudently, the CAO recommends that this be placed in various reserves and not programmed into new recurring expenditures.

Description	Sources	Uses
General Fund: Excess FBA	\$15,164,754	
General Fund: Increase Contingencies		\$493,227
General Fund: Reduce the use of the COVID 19 designation for one-time funding of Workers Compensation, Liability Insurance, and to close		7,206,632
remaining budget gap, as approved in the recommended budget.		
General Fund: Increase Rainy Day Funds		3,537,954
General Fund: Receive funds from the Community Development fund	40,190	
General Fund: Receive funds from the Library Fund	32,869	
General Fund: Increase Countywide Automation Replacement		2,000,000
General Fund: Increase General Government Building Replacement		2,000,000
Total Adjustments	\$15,237,813	\$15,237,813

Item 26 - FY 2021-22 Year End Financial Report. The County ended last fiscal year with a higher than estimated general fund balance, as noted in the item above. Other governmental special funds, such as capital improvement reserves and automation reserves, also performed well. Departmental savings and higher general revenues than were estimated contributed to the result.

Federal ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds were not expended as quickly as estimated. Primarily intended for various construction projects and operational program start-ups, they also contributed to the higher balance. This portion is temporary in that the projects and programs lapse over into the current fiscal year, and those funds will ultimately be expended. In fact, the Federal guidelines require that the funds all be expended prior to 2024. Otherwise, any remaining amount will have to be paid back.

The balances are going to be important as the County deals with large union contracts, which are under negotiation and for which increases are not included in the current year budget. The CAO has wisely recommended that the Board not program these balances, but instead place them in various reserve accounts as future year hedges.

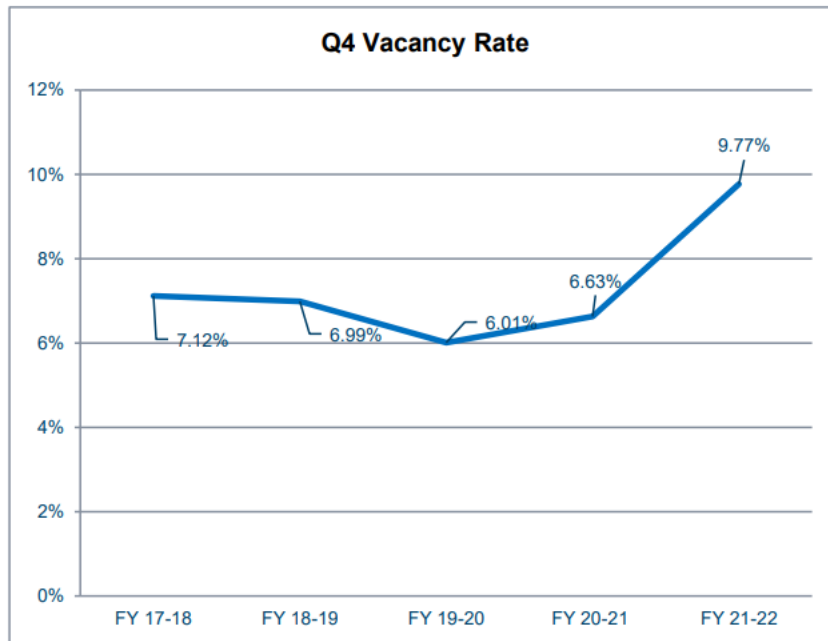
Certainly the pension fund will be negatively impacted by the huge stock market losses that have occurred so far this year.

Inflation is also having negative economic impacts across the board. County salaries and the cost of equipment, supplies, energy, motor fuels, and construction are all going through the roof.

If the Board of Supervisors majority flips progressive in January as a result of the November elections, many costly and expansive programs are likely to be installed. Also, some sources of revenue are likely to be diminished due to negative impact of regulations, fees, and taxes.

SUMMARY OF POSITION ALLOCATION CHANGES

FY 2021-22	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Quarter Start	2,847.25	2,860.25	2,883.25	2,923.50
FTE Additions	48.50	41.00	48.00	16.25
FTE Deletions	35.50	18.00	7.75	8.25
Quarter End	2,860.25	2,883.25	2,923.50	2,931.50
Net Change	13.00	23.00	40.25	8.00
% Change	0.46%	0.80%	1.40%	0.27%



The County employee vacancy rate at the end of the fourth quarter was 9.77%. This equates to 288.5 vacant positions. By comparison, the vacancy rate for the fourth quarter during FY 2020-21 was 6.63%. This represents an increase of 3.14 percentage points from the prior year and is likely attributed to increased demands in County operations resulting in a large number of positions being added to the Position Allocation List (PAL) over the last year, coupled with increased recruitment and retention challenges. While we continue to actively recruit to fill open positions, there have been delays due to a shift in the labor market, which has caused a decrease in number of individuals applying for County jobs and challenges in attracting qualified candidates. Efforts are underway in the Human Resources Department to address these challenges for the County.

Turnover: One of the problems plaguing many local governments and businesses is the inability to recruit and retain qualified employees. The problem appeared well before the COVID

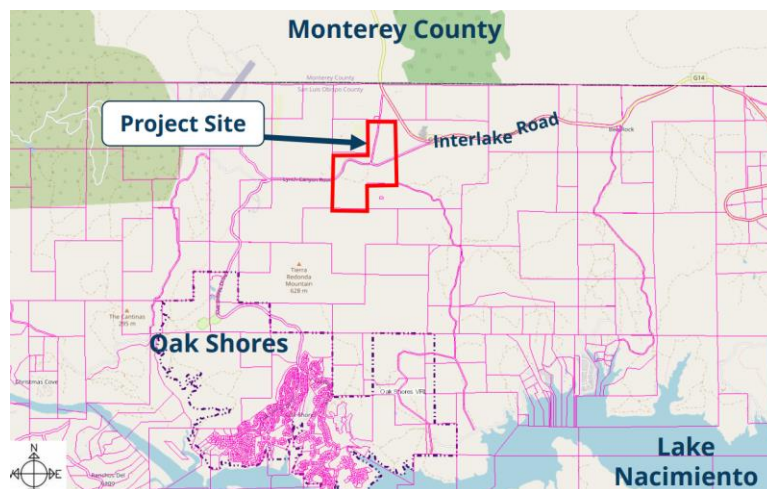
19 Pandemic began; however, the Pandemic and many Federal and state unemployment programs and other supports have exacerbated the problem. The County report states in part:

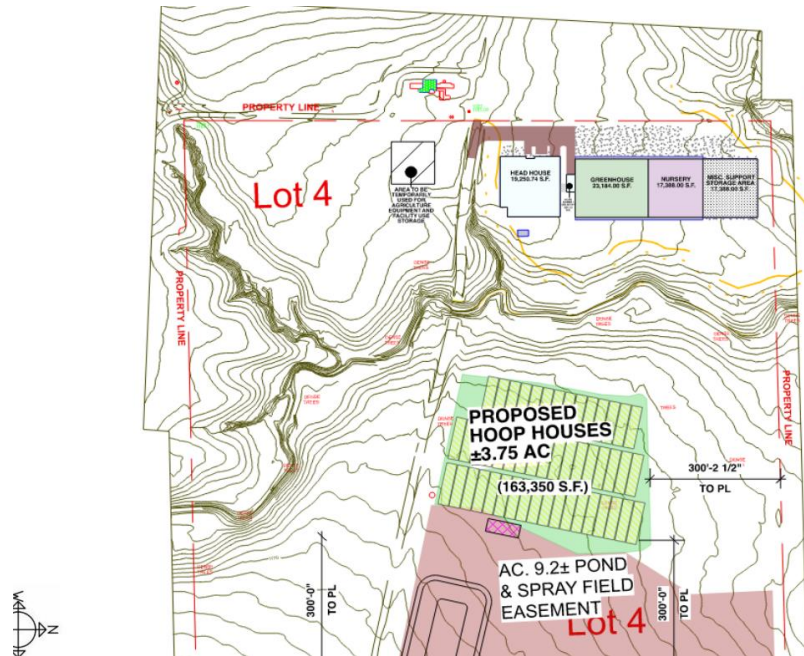
The County turnover rate at the end of the fourth quarter was 15.01%. This equates to 400 employee separations. By comparison, the turnover rate for the fourth quarter during the prior year was 10.16%. This represents an increase of 4.85 percentage points in turnover for the County overall. In the FY 2021-22 second and third quarter reports Human Resources projected that this number could reach 14.56% by 2023. Due to significant changes in the labor market and workforce priorities, we have seen an accelerated increase in our turnover and have exceeded our projected rate more quickly than expected. Unfortunately, labor trends are indicating that it is likely this momentum will continue into coming months. Efforts are underway to address recruitment and retention challenges that the County is currently facing.

Item 29 - Hearing to consider an appeal (APPL2021-00011) by Terri Gillen, of the Planning Commission's denial March 25, 2021, of a Conditional Use Permit (DRC2018-00223) for Greenmilk, LLC to establish cannabis operations with up to three acres of outdoor cannabis cultivation canopy within hoop houses, 22,000 square feet of indoor cannabis cultivation canopy, 14,686 square feet of commercial nursery, 1,876 square feet of manufacturing, 174 square feet of non-storefront dispensary, ancillary nursery, and processing. The manufacturing, ancillary processing, and dispensary activities will be housed within a new 19,250 square foot headhouse building. The indoor cultivation and nursery activities will take place within a 40,572 square foot greenhouse. The project proposes a 10,000 square foot building for associated warehouse and office use. The Board denied the application 5/0. There was a very large public turnout in opposition to the project.

The Planning Commission denied the permit back in 2021. The applicant has appealed on the grounds that the proposal specifically meets the requirement of the County Cannabis Ordinance. The staff report provides reasons to support the Board of Supervisors denying of the appeal and rejecting the project. Essentially the neighbors are opposed.

The project is located in the hills behind the residential areas next to Nacimiento Lake.





More opposition to cannabis operations is building throughout the county. Odor and alleged relations to criminal enterprises are cited as the main reasons for opposition.

Item 30 - Executive Session: CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL - PENDING LITIGATION (Government Code section 54956.9.) (4) SLO County Citizens for Good Government, Inc., Gomez, Maruska, Villa v. County of Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court, Case No. 22CVP-0007. The County Council stated that no reportable action was taken.

The lawsuit filed against the County by the group, County Citizens For Good Government, is simply a front for Bruce Gibson, the Democratic Party, and its overlapping coterie of leftist radicals. The “Citizens” assert that the County’s adopted restricting plan is illegal because it gerrymandered some districts to favor the Republicans.

Background: Back on February 9, 2022, Superior Court Judge Rita Federman turned down the Citizens’ request for an injunction. She indicated that the Citizens’ assertion that the redistricting plan might violate the law could have merit. However, the disruption of holding up the election would be detrimental to the public interest in terms of the June election, which contained supervisorial races.

It is not known what the Board will actually be discussing in the closed session. It does not appear that the case is on the Court calendar for any process such as a case management conference, let alone a trial.

Since this is a matter of prime importance in the upcoming Supervisorial election in November, it will be important that the Board members disclose where they stand on the issue. Release of this information would not compromise whatever litigation strategy the Board may have adopted. In that regard they must be severely divided.

In a deliciously tantalizing set of alternatives, what if the Board and the "Citizens" agreed to leave everything as is until a trial can be held and a decision rendered? Gibson could remain 2nd District Supervisor and Compton 4th District Supervisor until the trial results are known and a possible new election held?

Item 31 - Submittal of a presentation by Tom Jones with PG&E regarding Senate Bill 846 and the extended operation of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. The presentation indicated that PG&E was working both options- closure of the plant as scheduled and extension if found to be workable.

Governor Newsome signed Senate Bill 846 into law on September 2, 2022. As a result, the operation of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant (DCPP) has been extended to no later than October 31, 2029 for Unit 1 and October 31, 2030 for Unit 2, assuming the Nuclear Regulatory Commission extends the DCPP's operating licenses. Tom Jones, PG&E Sr. Director of Regulatory, Environmental and Repurposing, Nuclear Generation will provide an overview of the legislation and extended operations of the DCPP.

At the end, the Board should have passed a motion supporting the continuation of the power plant to reaffirm its past action.

Air Pollution Control District Meeting of Wednesday, September 28, 2022 (Completed)

The agenda was light and was primarily confined to housekeeping items and doling out patronage grants for electric school buses, EV charging stations, and the usual symbolic programs. However, one agenda item pertained to the distribution of various federally, state, and locally derived energy saving grants in SLO County. During the discussion, San Luis Obispo City Councilwomen Jan Marx pointed out that she serves on the Policy Board of the 3CE Energy Authority.

She hoped that the APCD staff was coordinating with 3CE, as it also distributes similar grants throughout its multi-county, multi-city service area. The APCD staff assured her that such coordination is taking place.

Marx then went on to inquire about how the APCD was assuring that the grants were available to people in low-income areas. The staff again noted that it was attempting to accomplish all this.

SLO County Supervisor John Peschong then pointed out that in the unincorporated Village of San Miguel there is one EV charging station. He further pointed out that it is rarely used, as it is unlikely that anyone in San Miguel can afford an electric vehicle. He further pointed out that in communities such as Shandon, few people have electric vehicles. He also pointed out that EV charging stations in Paso Robles don't seem to be used by locals, but instead service traffic between LA and San Francisco. Peschong was pointing out that there are many people who cannot benefit from 3CE's patronage programs.

Marx reacted and obliquely pointed out that 3CE's monthly electric rates are "20%" lower than those of PG&E. Evidently, she concluded that this cured any concern about the 3CE's providing equity in its programs. She capped it off with a comment that she would "educate" Peschong and the rest of the Board of Supervisors relative to the matter.

Subsequently, she emailed a rate comparison table to the Supervisors that shows the rate differentials for the various types of service – i.e., residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial. The table is extensive, as PG&E, which actually provides the energy, has a fairly complicated rate structure based on time of day and season of the year.

The most basic level is small residential:

Tiered Rate Plan E-1*

Residential: E-1	PG&E	3Choice
Generation Rate (\$/kWh)	\$0.12511	\$0.10400
PG&E Delivery Rate (\$/kWh)	\$0.19383	\$0.19383
PG&E PCIA/FF (\$/kWh)	\$0.02663	\$0.02058
Total Electricity Cost (\$/kWh)	\$0.34557	\$0.31841
Average Monthly Bill (\$)	\$137.32	\$126.53

Monthly usage: 397 kWh

It can be seen that the PG&E rate is reported as \$10.79 higher per month than 3CE. This is a rate differential of 9.2%, not 20%.

Note that the chart lists 3CE Choice, which is only partially CO₂ free. Both 3CE prime and PG&E green offer CO₂-free versions (3CE Prime and PG&E green). Marx did not include the price differential of these rates in her distribution.

When we searched for the schedules for all the power options, it appeared that 3CE had conveniently removed them.

3CE prime is 3CE’s supposedly truly CO₂-free version. Our recollection is that PG&E’s equivalent is actually less costly, but as noted above, the postings have disappeared.

2020 POWER CONTENT LABEL						
Central Coast Community Energy						
https://3cenery.org/understanding-clean-energy/						
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity (lbs CO ₂ e/MWh)			Energy Resources	3CE Choice	3CE Prime	2020 CA Power Mix
3CE Choice	3CE Prime	2020 CA Utility Average	Eligible Renewable ¹	31.1%	100.0%	33.1%
151	0	466	Biomass & Biowaste	1.7%	0.0%	2.5%
			Geothermal	8.8%	0.0%	4.9%
			Eligible Hydroelectric	2.8%	0.0%	1.4%
			Solar	15.3%	50.0%	13.2%
			Wind	2.5%	50.0%	11.1%
			Coal	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%
			Large Hydroelectric	55.7%	0.0%	12.2%
			Natural Gas	0.0%	0.0%	37.1%
			Nuclear	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%
			Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
			Unspecified Power ²	13.2%	0.0%	5.4%
			TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percentage of Retail Sales Covered by Retired Unbundled RECs ³ :				0%	0%	
<small>¹The eligible renewable percentage above does not reflect RPS compliance, which is determined using a different methodology. ²Unspecified power is electricity that has been purchased through open market transactions and is not traceable to a specific generation source. ³Renewable energy credits (RECs) are tracking instruments issued for renewable generation. Unbundled renewable energy credits (RECs) are not traceable to specific generation sources. Unbundled RECs are not reflected in the</small>						
For specific information about this electricity portfolio, contact:			Central Coast Community Energy (831) 641-7222			
For general information about the Power Content Label, visit:			http://www.energy.ca.gov/pcl/			
For additional questions, please contact the California Energy Commission at:			Toll-free in California: 844-454-2906 Outside California: 916-653-0237			

EMERGENT ISSUES

Item 1 - COVID in SLO County. The County changed the format of its COVID dashboard beginning this week. The website states in part:

Why did you change the dashboard?

The updated COVID-19 data dashboard focuses on metrics that are most meaningful at this stage in the pandemic response. While we have made continual updates throughout the pandemic, this is the first major re-design since the dashboard launched in March of 2020.

The primary goal of the dashboard update is to provide information that is more concise, meaningful, and practical for community members as they seek to understand and make decisions about their COVID-19 risk. A secondary goal is to streamline the data update process and leverage reliable state and national sources, allowing us to re-allocate staff time to other critical public health needs.

The nice longitudinal graph showing the rolling infection rate since the onset of the pandemic is now gone. Last week's version was the lowest since the pandemic began.

For now we will stop reporting, as the County seems to be avoiding lockdowns and other draconian measures.

Monkey Pox: So far, only one case of Monkey Pox has been reported in SLO County.

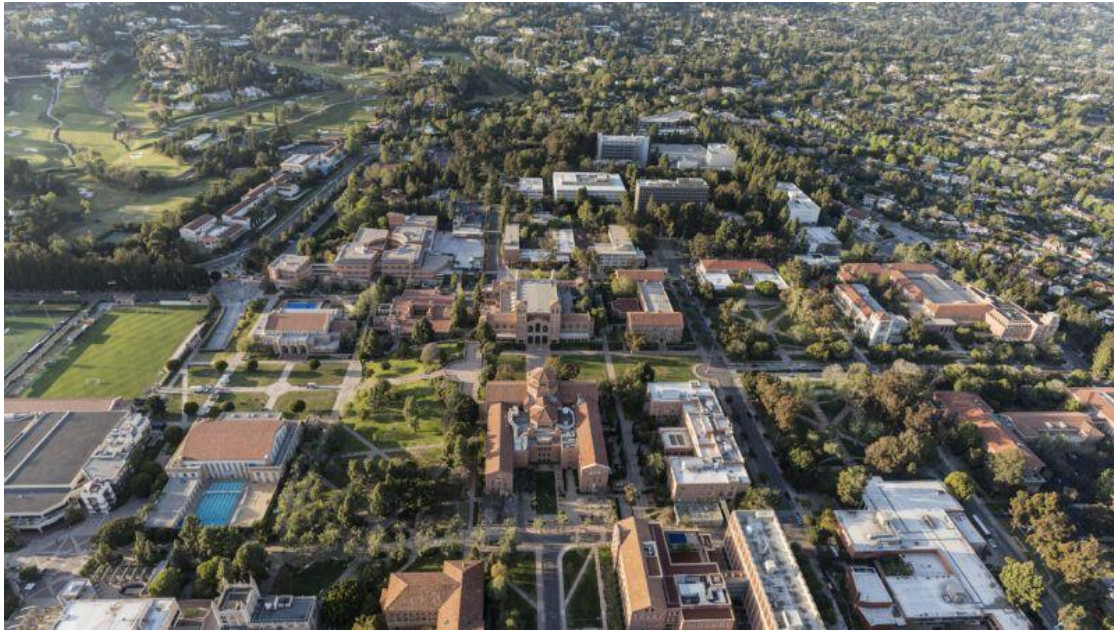
Other: At this point, it would be useful for the Health Department to join with the Behavioral Health Department, District Attorney, Sheriff, and the County Superintendent of Schools to provide an assessment of the impact of the legalization of recreational cannabis on the population, and particularly on the youth.

Item 2 - State chipping away at local zoning control. The State has legislated provisions for additional dwelling units (ADUs), dense housing near transit, conversion of commercial property to residential, and other provisions designed to override city and county NIMBYs in an effort to generate more housing. The latest effort exempts universities from CEQA complaints attempting to bar new student housing.

CALIFORNIA'S HOUSING CRISIS HASN'T SPARED THE STATE'S COLLEGE STUDENTS

A new law would make it harder for NIMBY neighbors to obstruct new dorms with bogus environmental complaints.

BY CHRISTIAN BRITSCHGI



(Trekandshoot/Dreamstime.com)

For many California college students, navigating homelessness or overcrowding has become part of getting the degree.

Five percent of University of California (U.C.) students and 10 percent of California State University (CSU) students are homeless during the academic year, according to one state estimate. The two public university systems have a combined 16,000-person waiting list for on-campus student housing.

Meanwhile, those in search of private, off-campus housing describe a punishing months-long grind of Craigslist searches and competing with 40 other applicants for the chance to rent a single room in a 50-year-old home.

"You'd regularly see the street lined with students sleeping in cars," says Nolan Gray, research director at California YIMBY and a PhD student at UCLA. "I had students in classes that I helped teach who were sleeping in cars, sleeping two to three people to a bedroom while still paying \$1,000 a rent. "

This has prompted some policy makers to remove regulatory obstacles to building more on-campus student housing.

On Wednesday, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a new bill, S.B. 886, that exempts some on-campus student housing projects from the arduous environmental review process mandated by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

CEQA requires government agencies to study the environmental impacts of projects, both public and private, that they have discretion over. The law also allows third parties to appeal or even sue over the approval of said projects if they think an agency hasn't done enough to study its environmental impacts.

Anti-growth activists frequently use the law to stop new housing, including new student housing.

In one 2018 case, UCLA agreed to shrink a new dormitory project by three floors—that's 200 beds—to stave off complaints from neighbors. That didn't stop those residents from filing a CEQA suit targeting the diminished project.

Sometimes these lawsuits stop students as well as the student housing.

Earlier this year, some Berkeley townies convinced the California Supreme Court to freeze student enrollment at U.C.–Berkeley on the logic that admitting more students was a "project" whose environmental impacts required studying under CEQA.

That lawsuit attracted nationwide ire, confirming for many the view that California's NIMBYs were successfully choking off progress and opportunity in the state. The outrage proved enough that the California Legislature—usually loath to touch CEQA—quickly passed a bill undoing Berkeley's enrollment freeze.

Some legislators at the time argued that such a narrow fix was insufficient.

"The triage legislation we passed today will solve that immediate problem. But it's not enough just to solve this immediate problem; we need to ask ourselves how we got here," said S.B. 886's author, state Sen. Scott Wiener (D–San Francisco), in a statement issued in March. "When it comes to CEQA, this UC Berkeley train wreck isn't a bug. It's a feature."

To prevent future trainwrecks, the bill Wiener authored exempts new university housing projects from CEQA, provided they adopt stringent energy and environmental design standards, aren't replacing existing housing, aren't in flood zones and historic districts, and contain fewer than 2,000 units or 4,000 beds. The university would also have to hold a public hearing on the project.

That doesn't make all dormitories bulletproof from CEQA lawsuits. It wouldn't save U.C.–Santa Barbara's infamous 4,500-bed cube dormitory. But the legislation still routes around the worst forms of CEQA obstructionism for obviously necessary and environmentally low-impact housing.

As Gray notes, it doesn't fix a more general problem of low-density zoning near major universities.

"If you look at almost every U.C. campus, in many cases they are hemmed in by single-family zoning," he tells *Reason*. "That's a policy that makes it illegal to build apartments, which is exactly the kind of housing stock that students need."

Earlier this year, the state did implement a new law that allows homeowners in single-family-zoned neighborhoods to divide their lots in two and build a duplex on each half. But local governments retain the ability to block larger apartment buildings and the single-room occupancy housing that students would typically rent.

California's housing crisis is a multifaceted thing. It requires multifaceted fixes.

California Globe on September 30, 2022.

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

THE POMPOUS PLEDGE TO CRASH THE GRID

BY ANDY CALDWELL

The war against fossil fuels is a war against reality. During the recent heat wave, Californians were urged to reduce their use of electricity lest we suffer from widespread rolling blackouts. Included in this request was the directive that electric vehicle owners should forego charging their vehicles. As this was occurring, the State Legislature gave the Diablo nuclear power plant a short lease on life because the state was forced to admit that we could not withstand the loss of this single power source which supplies California with 10% of our electricity.

However, what is not common knowledge is that state-produced natural gas-generated electricity provided upwards of 50% of our electricity during that heat wave, and imported natural gas, along with some other fuels that are considered “non-renewable”, generated another 19% of the power that got us through that week of very hot weather.

So, please, somebody, do the math! Whereas, California has pompously pledged to have 100% of its electricity generated by sources other than nuclear, natural gas, and other so-called “non-renewable sources” we are a very long way off from that fantasy. During extreme weather events like the one that just occurred “non-renewables” constituted upwards of 88% of the energy we needed to survive. Some Californians were nevertheless still subjected to rolling blackouts!

Proving themselves oblivious to the obvious, local jurisdictions, including the County of Santa Barbara, are considering piling on with ordinances to eliminate the use of natural gas hookups in new construction, thereby creating even more demand on our scarce electricity supplies. There is also a dirty trick that is typically employed in these types of circumstances. Whereas the

headline will read “government bans natural gas hookups in new construction”, the truth is that any business or residence that needs a permit to “add-on” to their existing structure/business could trigger the ban.

Moreover, there are some businesses that can’t afford any source of energy other than natural gas because of the high cost of electricity. This includes the agricultural sector of our economy. For instance, greenhouses are used to grow a variety of plants including flowers, vegetables, berries, and even marijuana. Most of these greenhouses do double duty. That is, they shield the plants from extreme exposure to the sun during certain times of the year, while during the winter they facilitate the ability of farmers to use natural gas to keep the plants from freezing at night. The controlled environment of a greenhouse allows a 24-hour growing cycle not available in open field operations that has several environmental benefits including the use of less water for the plants. If natural gas hookups are eliminated these ag operations will not survive.

What we don’t know yet is if the county’s proposed ban on natural gas will extend to propane and liquified natural gas? Here too, the impacts to rural residents would be devastating because in too many rural locales the electricity service is still considered spotty at best and ridiculously expensive. Also, many manufacturing and ag operations use LNG-fueled forklifts in their operations that have a lower operating cost than electric forklifts and less downtime due to charging requirements.

Finally, hundreds of businesses use natural gas-powered generators, which Newsom wants to ban, to keep operations running during blackouts, including hospitals! Santa Barbara County has dozens of these generators as does the State of California. What are they going to use in an emergency if California bans the production of natural gas, thereby creating artificial shortages and price spikes? If you think we won’t need these generators when we go all solar, the county recently purchased a diesel generator to back up a solar panel complex and a battery storage system because they know these systems can’t be relied upon exclusively!

Andy Caldwell is Executive Director of the Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business of Santa Barbara County, Host of the Andy Caldwell Radio Show, public speaker, and preeminent government watchdog.



THE THINNEST VENEER OF CIVILIZATION

We are in a great experiment in which regressive progressivism discounts all the institutions and methodologies of the past that have guaranteed a safe, affluent, well-fed and sheltered America

BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON

Civilization is fragile. It hinges on ensuring the stuff of life.

To be able to eat, to move about, to have shelter, to be free from state or tribal coercion, to be secure abroad, and safe at home—only that allows cultures to be freed from the daily drudgery of mere survival.

Civilization alone permits humans to pursue sophisticated scientific research, the arts, and the finer aspects of culture.

So, the great achievement of Western civilization—consensual government, individual freedom, rationalism in partnership with religious belief, free market economics, and constant self-critique and audit—was to liberate people from daily worry over state violence, random crime, famine, and an often-unforgiving nature.

But so often the resulting leisure and affluence instead deluded arrogant Western societies into thinking that modern man no longer needed to worry about the fruits of civilization he took to be his elemental birthright.

As a result, the once prosperous Greek city-state, Roman Empire, Renaissance republics, and European democracies of the 1930s imploded—as civilization went headlong in reverse.

We in the modern Western world are now facing just such a crisis.

We talk grandly about the globalized Great Reset. We blindly accept the faddish New Green Deal. We virtue signal about defunding the police. We merely shrug at open borders. And we brag about banning fertilizers and pesticides, outlawing the internal combustion engine, and discounting Armageddon in the nuclear age—as if on autopilot we have already reached utopia.

But meanwhile Westerners are systematically destroying the very elements of our civilization that permitted such fantasies in the first place.

Take fuel. Europeans arrogantly lectured the world that they no longer need traditional fuels. So, they shut down nuclear power plants. They stopped drilling for oil and gas. And they banned coal.

What followed was a dystopian nightmare. Europeans will burn dirty wood this winter as their civilization reverts from postmodern abundance to premodern survival.

The Biden Administration ossified oil fields. It canceled new federal oil and gas leases. It stopped pipeline construction and hectored investors to shun fossil fuels.

When scarcity naturally followed, fuel prices soared.

The middle class has now mortgaged its upward mobility to ensure that they might afford gasoline, heating oil, and skyrocketing electricity.

The duty of the Pentagon is to keep America safe by deterring enemies, reassuring allies, and winning over neutrals.

It is not to hector soldiers based on their race. It is not to indoctrinate recruits in the woke agenda. It is not to become a partisan political force.

The result of those suicidal Pentagon detours is the fiasco in Afghanistan, the aggression of Vladimir Putin's Russia, the new bellicosity of China, and the loud threats of rogue regimes like Iran.

At home, the Biden Administration inexplicably destroyed the southern border—as if civilized nations of the past never needed such boundaries.

Utter chaos followed. Three million poured into the United States illegally. They entered without audit, and largely without skills, high-school diplomas, or capital.

The streets of our cities are anarchical—and by intent.

Defunding the police, emptying the jails, and destroying the criminal justice system unleashed a wave of criminals. It is now open season on the weak and innocent.

America is racing backwards into the 19th century wild West. Predators maim, kill, and rob with impunity. Felons correctly conclude that bankrupt postmodern “critical legal theory” will ensure them exemption from punishment.

Few Americans know anything about agriculture, except to expect limitless supplies of inexpensive, safe, and nutritious food at their beck and call.

But that entitlement for 330 million hungry mouths requires massive water projects, and new dams and reservoirs. Farmers rely on steady supplies of fertilizer, fuels, and chemicals. Take away that support—as green nihilists are attempting—and millions will soon go hungry, as they have since the dawn of civilization.

Perhaps nearly a million homeless now live on the streets of America. Our major cities have turned medieval with their open sewers, garbage-strewn sidewalks, and violent vagrants.

So, we are in a great experiment in which regressive progressivism discounts all the institutions, and the methodologies of the past that have guaranteed a safe, affluent, well-fed and sheltered America.

Instead, we arrogantly are reverting to a new feudalism as the wealthy elite—terrified of what they have wrought—selfishly retreat to their private keeps.

But the rest who suffer the consequences of elite flirtations with nihilism cannot even afford food, shelter, and fuel. And they now feel unsafe, both as individuals and as Americans.

As we suffer self-inflicted mass looting, random street violence, hyperinflation, a nonexistent border, unaffordable fuel, and a collapsing military, Americans will come to appreciate just how thin is the veneer of their civilization.

When stripped away, we are relearning that what lies just beneath is utterly terrifying.

*Victor Davis Hanson is a distinguished fellow of the Center for American Greatness and the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. He is an American military historian, columnist, a former classics professor, and scholar of ancient warfare. He has been a visiting professor at Hillsdale College since 2004. Hanson was awarded the National Humanities Medal in 2007 by President George W. Bush. Hanson is also a farmer (growing raisin grapes on a family farm in Selma, California) and a critic of social trends related to farming and agrarianism. He is the author most recently of *The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won*, [The Case for Trump and the newly released The Dying Citizen](#).*

This article first appeared in September 29 Hoover Daily Update and also American Greatness.

THE STATE OF DREAMS

Every utopia is a dystopia. Especially California.

BY DANIEL GREENFIELD

It's a cool dark night in California and all the lights are out. Sloping rooftops dotted with solar panels gleam even more darkly than usual. The air is still and not a single breeze stirs even the lightest wind turbine. Somewhere out in the darkness Diablo Canyon, the aging nuclear plant, still running, is keeping what power there is on. The Northern Chumash or as the media insists on calling them, the Yak Titu Yak Tihini, are demanding the territory which would make them California's second nuclear power. They might prove to be better guardians of keeping the state's power on than the Democrats. The white liberal man has had his chance.

The great westward drive that began with Lewis and Clark has been steadily rolling backward. Southern California is filled with moving trucks headed to Arizona, Texas and Nevada. Those

who can afford it, fly to Florida. The Russians were here once and then the Spanish. The American presence in California was more comprehensive and lasted longer, but may one day leave sagging Wells Fargo banks and decrepit mini malls filled with sushi places and nail salons the way the Spanish left their names and their missions up Highway 101.

It's a beautiful country, but so is Afghanistan and any number of otherwise unlivable places. Every other visit to a store seems to end with a shoplifter boldly walking out with a few items in hand. Sometimes a cashier, usually young and male, shouts futilely, "Hey, sir" into the wind. A few older women, cashiers and customers, mutter about how it's hurting everyone. A manager says this is the new normal. No one connects it to the coming elections. The media tells them that the madness is a social phenomenon, a response to inequality, the pandemic, and climate change, and they never bother to argue. Just go on and vote for Karen Bass and Newsom.

While the police are nowhere, security personnel in tactical vests carrying far more firepower than they could possibly need are everywhere. Many of them are current or former police who found that private security pays better. Others may be immigrants who barely speak English. Like most Third World countries from Mexico to Iraq, California has a rising private military that watches over everything from grocery stores to houses of worship. Liberals complained about the militarization of the LAPD, but this is the militarization of everything.

We think of Third World countries as poor, but they're not. Visit Karachi, Cairo and Jakarta, or even Baghdad, Gaza, or even Kabul, and you'll see great riches and even greater poverty. The problem with income inequality isn't that CEOs make two million times more than their employees do, it's that there's nothing in the middle. The middle class makes a society sane and livable. It gives people something to reach for rather than beating their wives or knifing their neighbors in the dark. The bourgeois is civilization. Without the middle class, there's barbarism, a crude hierarchy and the rule of force.

California, always in the cultural vanguard, is losing its middle class faster than the rest of the country. The middle class made the state's cities sprawl into vast stretches of spaghetti freeways, lots of surprisingly affordable houses whose garages spawned the technological revolution that changed the world, world class universities whose engineers went to work for the state's defense industries, and beyond them the orange groves and horse ranches, and the hills just made for hiking and riding.

Without the middle class, California is a vastly wealthy and endlessly poor Third World state, blessed with great landscapes and no one to fill them with except gang members, day laborers, welfare recipients and assorted immigrants who will move on just like the Americans have. Inflation and recession are only accelerating the inevitable migration. Third World migrants are coming northward and American migrants are going east. "Go west, young man," Horace Greeley's advice, no longer seems so sound anymore. And no one except aspiring starlets and engineers dorming eight to a room in hopes of hitting the startup or stardom lottery are taking it.

California was as far westward as most Americans seemed likely to go. Now Americans are moving eastward to a new manifest destiny of decline. The migrations of the last century that reshaped the country are being reversed. People are leaving the cities. Black people are retracing

their migration from the South to the Northeast. Americans are leaving California to immigrants from Asia and Latin America. The nation's history is coming unwound, running in reverse like an old film reel, which leaves us perilously close to replaying the Civil War.

There is something about the state that invites big musings and bigger dreams. But there's little to dream about anymore. The defense industries are moribund, the orchards are starved of water, the entertainment industry is just another side venture of the tech industry, and the tech industry is beginning to flee the mess it helped create. And you can't just run an entire state on being a place where rich people can enjoy seaside views if they can stomach the crime, the taxes, and the madness. Southern Europe is already full of places like that. And Greece, Spain and Portugal don't have a booming future.

The trouble with California, like New York City, is its grandiosity. Building skyscrapers and rolling back the desert gave people the sense that anything was possible. But the horizontal and vertical towers of babel were only receptacles for civilization, not civilization itself. Men and women came to big cities and big lands to reinvent themselves and went mad instead.

"One sometimes gets the impression that the mere words 'Socialism' and 'Communism' draw towards them with magnetic force every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, 'Nature Cure' quack, pacifist, and feminist in England," George Orwell complained in *The Road to Wigan Pier*.

California, like most major cities, is run by those people now. But it is in the tarnished state that they let their wildest and maddest dreams roam. California, for Jerry Brown, would be a spaceship. It's a spaceship now in a decaying orbit with a crew quarreling over how to distribute legal marijuana franchises to achieve equity between racial groups, union members, ex-cons, transgenders and the politically connected. Not that it matters because everyone is still buying the old-fashioned illegal pot.

Orwell could hardly have imagined this dystopia. It's more Aldous Huxley, an Oxford graduate who died in Los Angeles of an LSD overdose on the day of JFK's assassination. Huxley narrowly missed seeing the brave new world that was coming. The decadent intellectuals drugged out of their minds and the savages roaming beyond did not take long to show up in California. And the rest is history and current events.

"We will get our energy from the sun," they declare. "Houses for the unhoused," they clamor. "Money is just an idea," they insist. "Crime is a social construct invented by white supremacy."

What happens when people lose their sense of meaning and purpose? They sit on the beach, look out into the ocean, blind themselves with gorgeous sunsets and go out of their minds. Sanity is a function of responsibility. We are only as sane as the tasks we set ourselves. Sanity means getting up in the morning and knowing what you have to do and why you have to do it. It's also reality, maturity and adulthood.

If people in their thirties and forties act like teenagers did a generation ago, it's because they live like teenagers. And in tent cities strung along under overpasses, there are people in their fifties and sixties, strung out, staring madly, who never grew up. The smelly unshaven Peter Pans will never grow up. They will shoot up, get high, get stoned, get drunk, catch diseases, kill each other and die. And as a compassionate society, we will spend billions of dollars enabling them to destroy themselves. Then we'll get all our power from the sun and change our genders.

There have always been two Californias. The state of working people, farmers and builders, engineers and truck drivers and the other California.

"My own belief is that California has a unique place on the planet. It's been a place of dreams. We can pursue a path of benign energy," Governor Jerry Brown once said.

People aren't meant to live in dreams. After a while they turn into nightmares.

In the darkness, an electric car emitting a spaceship sound whooshes past. Somewhere in the night a crazy laugh rings on and on. A billboard advertises app-based marijuana deliveries. A naked man is holding a giant pot leaf in front of his crotch. The crazy laughs breaks off into sobbing and cursing. A free magazine lying draped over a dying bird of paradise bush advertises a drag queen act.

We live in the land of dreams. Mad, idiotic dreams. And those dreams are killing us.

The postmodern soma of the lotus eaters isn't just something you snort or shoot up, it's in the culture. Utopia is in the air, the water and the cloud. And like all utopias, it's a dystopia.

A delusional nightmare that people are fleeing the way that they did from the Soviet Union.

Delusions, like all viruses, kill the host. The Left and its culture wars are a grand delusion. Unlike class warfare, which for all its evil and folly was rooted in real issues and in human nature, the postmodern culture wars are the deconstructionist fantasies of perpetual revolutionaries who live in imaginary utopias. After repeatedly failing to realize a classless society, their new utopia will also get rid of gender, technology, the family and borders.

That is not the work of people living in the real world.

But for now, the power is occasionally on, there's sometimes food in the stores, and the system hasn't collapsed yet. Reality is harsh, but the 72 degree weather keeps it at bay.

There's still time for one more walk, one more breath and one more sunset. And tomorrow? Just follow the moving trucks and the great migration from the land of dreams back to the real world.

Daniel Greenfield, a Shillman Journalism Fellow at the David Horowitz Freedom Center, is an investigative journalist and writer focusing on the radical Left and Islamic terrorism. Front Page Magazine of September 30, 2022.



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