

VALLEY VOTE

The general meeting of Valley Vote was held on November 19, 2012 at Galpin Ford featuring LA City Attorney, Nutch Trutanich.

Nutch presented his "Blueprint for Change" and highlighted his accomplishments as City Attorney. He explained that the City Attorney is responsible for both LA City civil actions (60%) and criminal prosecutions (40%). His budget and staff are than previous administrations, having reduced staff from 1150 to 850 people. His office is also responsible for creating the wording for all ordinances as well which has increased from past averages of 245 to over 600 per year. Although his office budget is significantly reduced, he also reduced outside council costs to less than half of previous years.

He put the magnitude of activity into perspective. The City has 72 gangs with 44 injunctions in place to control them. The CA must review over 100K arrests per year and handles over 55,000 cases. He noted that crime is at an all-time low. He attributed active prosecution for the reduced crime. He felt that the "catch and release" being fostered by recent court decisions coupled with limited budgets will not work to further reduce crime and will instead foster an increase as criminals are subject to early release.

He told us that his accomplishments are detailed at www.tru2013.com.

Nutch indicated that some of his key accomplishments included:

- innovative handling of skid row residents re AB109 over crowding
- go after slum lords which reduce property values – bank properties with lots of citations such as those owned by Deutch Bank and US Bank became the subject of injunctions to properly maintain their properties.
- graffiti control – including an anti "metro assassin" injunction. Gang members are given incentives to reform because injunction restrictions are lifted if they stay clean for two years.
- won a case against Blue Cross, Well Point, and Blue Shield because they had so many exclusions resulting in a \$2M fine and demand best practices....
- continuing the Neighborhood Prosecutors Program, but it was reduced to 20 people from 71 to support increased criminal activities.
- instituted a Mobile billboards ban; and imitation firearm ban

Nutch responded to numerous questions from meeting participants about how we will better protect the City from substantial liabilities and how to resolve major issues facing our City.

Several committee reports were presented on topics of interest:

Vic Viereck– Taxagedon

Although the Los Angeles City Council has supposedly recognized the city's anti-business image by making concessions in the city's really GROSS receipts tax, the majority of the Council has continued to propose other anti-business policies. The GROSS receipts tax has not yet been repealed, but certain successful temporary exemptions have been granted.

After consideration of three different kinds of additional taxes, the City Council is strongly considering putting a ½% additional sales tax on the March 2013 ballot. The three considered taxes were a property transfer tax, a parcel tax to fund parks, and a 50% increase in parking lot/garage fees.

The ½% sales tax increase would be an increase to only the city's existing 1 ¼% portion of the total sales tax. Since one of the exemptions to the GROSS receipts tax is to bring auto dealerships back to the City of Los Angeles, an increased sales tax would be contrary to that intent.

One other anti-business policy that I have been reporting on is the Exclusive Waste Hauling proposal. It was voted on last Wednesday. Although some amendments sent it back to committee for 18 months of review, the Exclusive part of it was conceptually approved. The council chamber and hallway were packed with people, primarily bussed in union members. Many apartment owners and business representatives were also there.

The three amendments were:

1. A contracted waste hauler cannot raise the rate of their service more than the annual allowable rent increase set by the city on contracts for buildings subject to the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.
2. Create an exemption process for "unique" buildings which may not be able to be served by the contracted hauler.
3. Owners and managers cannot be held liable for fines or fees that may appear in regulations in the ordinance regarding recycling and the separation of trash.

Although Councilman LaBonge asked some pertinent questions, the three councilmembers who fully understand the problems of Exclusive Trash Hauling, and voted against it, are Councilmembers Jan Perry, Mitch Englander, and Bernard Parks.

Denny Schneider - Airport Report

The LAWA push for LAX expansion is between critical segments. The LAWA Program Manager tells that the controversial 12,000 pages of Specific Plan Amendment Reviews and Report containing mostly runway expansion options is awaiting LAWA finalization of responses to the thousands of public comments submitted. He told us that the final Environmental Review Report will be released in January and immediately engaged into the approval cycle. It's unofficial, but we hear that the LAWA Executive Director will be calling for a very expensive, high construction risk plan to expand the runways north into Westchester. No time is scheduled to allow comment assessment or review of all planned changes in the new

document. It is being rushed through the City Council and Mayor approval cycle for action.

Meanwhile, separately, LAWA is pushing forward on separate plans to build a new series of maintenance areas and midfield terminal complex. LAWA is also going to coordinate with MTA to develop some type

On a positive note, LAWA is finalizing their ten year in the writing document, called a Part 161 Request, which seeks approval of the FAA to limit late night takeoffs to the east when normal air traffic flow is to the west. This will reduce by hundreds of thousands the number of people awakened at night.

Regionalization at Palmdale remains a pipe dream and at Ontario Airport remains under LAWA control and continues to lose more passenger flights each month. One bright spot is that Southern California Association of Governments is reforming its aviation planning efforts to help develop a new regional plan. We expect some positive organizing action in January or February.

Meanwhile, the FAA has moved into its design efforts for the future So Cal Air Space Metroplex Area to accommodate substantial flight growth in the region.

For more

information: www.RegionalSolution.org DennySchneider@WeLiveFree.com

Bart Reed – Transportation issues

Transit Coalition Executive Director Bart Reed gave an update on transportation matters. Reed recounted a series of blows against opponents of rail projects at the local and state level during November. For example, a Sacramento County judge ruled against high-speed rail opponents by denying a preliminary injunction that would have stopped the project. Also, the California Supreme Court denied an injunction against the Expo Line but will take on the lawsuit from Neighbors for Smart Rail. In both cases, judges allowed the lawsuits to proceed, to which hearings will be held at a later date. A similar attempt by Downtown LA interests to stop the Metro Regional Connector was also shot down.

Reed also discussed what's happening with the CSUN Transportation Tiger Team. The intern group finished documenting blight on the Orange Line right-of-way. To date, students have sent letters to City Councilmembers and addressed the issue. Also, the Tiger Team is finishing up a report on the so-called 88 Corners in the Northeast Valley that are ADA-deficient and pose safety hazards to transit users and pedestrians.

Finally, Reed updated listeners on the Measure J vote. Since the ballots cast on Election Day brought the measure to within 2% of passage, proponents had hoped that absentee ballots would close the gap. However, the most recent count has the vote still more than 1% from passage, with less than 200,000 ballots left.

The next monthly meeting of Valley VOTE will be on Monday, January 21, 2013 at Galpin Ford featuring a meet and greet with candidates for Los Angeles City offices, including City Controller, City Attorney, and invited mayoral candidates.

Valley VOTE Mission Statement

Valley VOTE, a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley Residents, business people, educators, community activists and organizations, is committed to exploring and fostering the implementation of programs that empower the people of the San Fernando Valley and the city of Los Angeles, to improve local governance, education and public participation on policy matters. Please forward this Email to interested individuals and organizations. If you would like to be removed from our distribution list please send an email to President, Joe Vitti at javittisr@cs.com.