

# COLAB

San Luis Obispo County



The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

## WEEKLY UPDATE OCTOBER 6 - 12, 2024

COLAB  
San Luis Obispo County



Wednesday, October 23rd  
5:30—7:30 PM  
Thousand Hills Ranch  
550 Thousand Hills Rd.  
Pismo Beach, CA

## FALL FORUM

Thousand Hills Rd.  
is off of Price  
Canyon. Please use  
caution, as the road  
is somewhat  
hidden around a  
bend in the road  
and it comes up on  
you suddenly. Once  
on Thousand Hills  
Road, follow the  
road for  
approximately one  
mile to the red  
roofed barn on  
right!

BEER, LOCAL FINE WINES, AND  
HOT & COLD APPETIZERS  
WILL BE SERVED

**Featuring:**  
**INSURANCE CRISIS -**  
**THE REPORTS, THE**  
**REASON, AND THE**  
**REALITY...HOW DO WE**  
**FIX IT?**

**HEAR FROM OUR**  
**INDUSTRY EXPERTS,**  
**DAVE BELMONT ADLER**  
**BELMONT GROUP,**  
**TYLER RILEY RILEY &**  
**RILEY, AND DARREN**  
**CAESAR HUB.**



Dave Belmont



Tyler Riley



Darren Caesar

RSVP appreciated by October 16th — there is no charge for this informative event!  
Email: [colabslo@gmail.com](mailto:colabslo@gmail.com) or call (805) 548-0340



**THIS WEEK  
SEE PAGE 5**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**SET HEARING FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT TAX IN LOS OSOS  
BOS MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2025 ISSUED**

**BOARD TO “REPURPOSE” IRRIGATED LAND IN PASO BASIN**

**BOS TO CONSIDER SUPPORTING PROP. 36  
(RESTORING PUBLIC SAFETY)**

**SUPERVISOR REQUESTS AND COMMENTS**

**CENTRAL COAST COMMUNITY ENERGY AUTHORITY  
OPERATIONS BOARD**

**PROVOCATIVE RISK ANALYSIS RAISES GOVERNANCE QUESTIONS  
WHAT IF A NEW “ADAM HILL” GETS ON THE BOARD?**

**PLAN FOR THE TAKEOVER OF ATASCADERO AND THE  
UNINCORPORATED COUNTY ARE DETAILED**

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

**IN A TURNABOUT, STAFF RECOMMENDS MORE LAUNCHES  
AIR FORCE DISCLOSES DEFENSE USES OF PRIVATE LAUNCHES AND  
STARLINK**

**COMMISSIONERS WILL DECIDE IF FROG DISTURBING SONIC BOOMS  
TRUMP NATIONAL DEFENSE**

**PLANNING COMMISSION CANCELED**

**LAST WEEK  
SEE PAGE 18**

# **NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

## **SLOCOG**

**VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED COULD SHUT DOWN HOMES AND NEW DEVELOPMENT**

**VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED MANDATE WAS TOO PERPLEXING  
TAX DECISION AND ADMIN. STRUCTURE KICKED DOWN THE ROAD  
WHY DON'T OUR LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS HOLD HART, ADDIS, LIMON, &  
LAIRD ACCOUNTABLE? ARE THEY TOTALLY IN THE TANK?  
INSTEAD THEY JUST WRING THEIR HANDS ABOUT STATE MANDATES**



**SUPERVISOR ORTIZ-LEGG PROPERLY ASKED IF THE NEW METHOD OR OLD METHOD IS MORE COSTLY? – 3 TIMES – NO ONE WOULD ANSWER**

## **OTHERWISE A LIGHT WEEK**

### **ADDENDUM I - SEE PAGE 34**

**NOVEMBER STATE PROPOSITION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **EMERGENT ISSUES**

**SEE PAGE 24**

**INTERACTIVE DATABASE REVEALS WHICH  
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE FISCALLY SOUND  
OR AT HIGH-RISK OF FISCAL CRISIS  
SLO COUNTY GRADED “D”**

## COLAB IN DEPTH SEE PAGE 29

### AMERICA DOESN'T NEED MORE "EFFICIENT" GOVERNMENT

ITS TRUE PURPOSE IS TO *TRANSFER AS MUCH MONEY AND  
POWER AS POSSIBLE TO POLITICIANS, FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND  
THE POLITICALLY-CONNECTED RICH*  
**AND IN THAT PURSUIT, THE GOVERNMENT IS WILDLY EFFICIENT**  
BY CONNOR O'KEEFFE

### LIFE IN KAMALA'S CALIFORNIA

*A Harris administration will impose California's soft tyranny on the  
entire nation while her cronies laugh all the way to the bank*  
BY EDWARD RING

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byron-grant@c21home.com  
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## THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

### Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, October 8, 2024 (Scheduled)

**Item 1 - Request 1) to approve the introduction of two ordinances relating to Los Osos community development: [a] an ordinance to amend the Growth Management Ordinance (Title 26 of the County Code) to establish new residential growth rate regulations for the community of Los Osos, establish regulations pertaining to the Los Osos Waitlist to Build, and modify growth management regulations to streamline administration of the Growth Management Ordinance (County File Number: LRP2020-00006), and [b] an ordinance to establish Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan (LOHCP) Mitigation Fees for the implementation of the LOHCP.** The purpose of this item is to set a hearing for October 29, 2024. If the matters are approved at that hearing, the legal Los Osos Development moratorium that has existed since 1988 will be lifted. However, the number of permits will be limited to 1% of something called the **5-Year Rolling Average of Annual Basin Yield Metric** that needs some explanation. A new mitigation fee will be imposed on any development.

Other restrictions tied to the Los Osos Conservation Plan will stop progress as well. Applicants will have to deal with a complicated waiting list.



Table 1. Annual Growth Rate based on Basin Yield Metric.

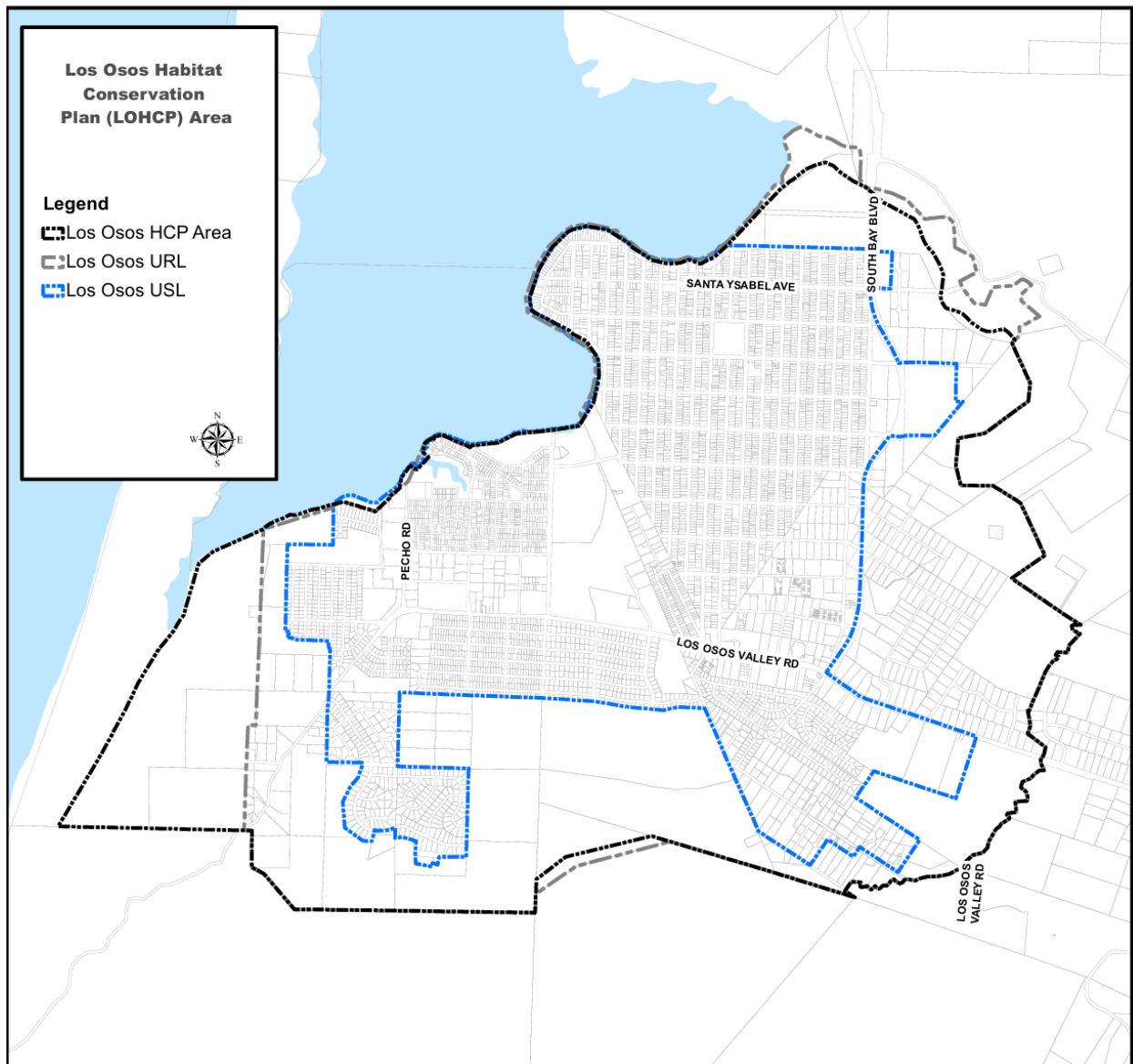
5-Year Rolling Average of Annual Basin Yield Metric	Annual Growth Rate
≤80%	1.0%
>80% to 81%	0.8%
>81% to 82%	0.6%
>82% to 83%	0.4%
>83% to 84%	0.2%
>84%	0.0%

Summary of Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan Mitigation Costs and Fees <sup>1, 2</sup>			
Category	Acres <sup>2</sup>	Planning Level Mitigation Total Costs (\$)	Percentage of Total Mitigation Costs
<b>Mitigation Cost</b>			
Administration (permit term)	532	16,683,835	38%
Administration (post-permit)	532	4,060,452	9%
Management and Monitoring (permit term)	386	5,892,370	14%
Management and Monitoring (post-permit)	386	6,899,673	16%
Preserve Start-Up	279	1,944,715	4%
Restoration	46	3,020,422	7%
Acquisition of Fee Title	77	4,934,145	11%
<b>Total Cost</b>		<b>43,435,612</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Mitigation Fee Summary per Acre</b>			
Restoration /Management/Administration Fee	532	72,435	
Habitat Protection Fee	521	9,467	
<b>Total</b>		<b>81,901</b>	
<b>Mitigation Fee Summary per Square Foot<sup>3</sup></b>			
Restoration /Management/Administration Fee	532	1.66	
Habitat Protection Fee	521	0.22	
<b>Total</b>		<b>1.88</b>	
<sup>1</sup> The costs in this table have been updated from the December 2020 version of the LOHCP (Table 7-8). These costs are as of July 2024.			
<sup>2</sup> Values may not appear correctly calculated due to rounding error. Total Costs includes County-wide Overhead.			
<sup>3</sup> Project fees will be charged by multiplying the area of ground-disturbing activities in square feet by the values listed here. In the text, fees are rounded to the nearest cent for ease of discussion. A 3.8% CPI Adjustment was applied to the fee amounts and updated as part of the fee hearing scheduled on October 29, 2024.			

Someone will have to explain all this. But it appears that a 2,000 sq. foot house would have to pay a mitigation fee of \$3,750 on top of all the existing fees, such as the road fee, school fees,

AB 1600 fees, sewer fees, Quimby fees, application processing fees, and of course all the professional consultant costs to help process your application.

Thus, after construction of a \$200 million sewer treatment plant, millions of dollars in plan development, millions for the Habitat Conservation Plan, and a 36-year moratorium, you still have a de facto moratorium except for the wealthiest people.



The County could have bought the whole place in 1988 for less than it has spent on all of this. It could have turned it into a wetland preserve.



**Now if you're smart, you'll buy a nice home in Depoe Bay Oregon.**

© 2024



**\$457,500**

**4175 N Highway 101 UNIT J3, Depoe Bay, OR 97341**

**Nearby View:**



It does rain about 18 days per month in the winter and 3 days per month in the summer, but less fog days than in Los Osos.



**Item 2 - 2025 Board Meeting Calendar.** Please save this so you can plan your Tuesdays next year. It's the ones in grey.

2025 Board of Supervisors Meeting Calendar

January							February							March							April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4							1							1			1	2	3	4	5
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30			
														30	31												
May							June							July							August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7			1	2	3	4	5						1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30
																					31						
September							October							November							December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4							1		1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28	29	30	31	1	2	3
														30							4	5	6				
Board Meetings							Swearing in Meeting							Board Break							CSAC Annual Conference						
CSAC Leg Annual Conference							Budget Hearings							Holidays													

**Item 8 - Request to approve and authorize the Chairperson to sign a professional consultant services contract with Land IQ, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$298,045 to design the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Multibenefit Irrigated Land Repurposing (MILR) Program and develop related implementing documents.** The Board is being asked to expend \$300,000 from the Paso Groundwater management budget to hire a consultant to design a program to:

*The subject of today's action relates to a portion of Component 5, namely to retain the services of a qualified firm to provide professional services as required to design the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Multi-Benefit Irrigated Land Repurposing (MILR) Program. When fully implemented, the MILR Program will create a pathway for owners of commercially irrigated agricultural lands in the Paso Robles Basin to voluntarily reduce the volume of groundwater being pumped while protecting and preserving the integrity of the groundwater basin and improve farm operations in the future. The consultant will design the MILR Program and develop a MILR Program Implementation Plan that addresses all MILR Program elements, including without limitation: farming unit definition and eligibility criteria; program rules and regulations; enabling ordinances; California environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation; outreach strategies; projected program costs and funding mechanism; legal authority, and other elements as may be determined to be appropriate*

**It appears that the funds being appropriated are on top of the \$600,000 appropriated to the Paso Basin Cooperative Committee back on September 24 , 2024. Is this a double dip? Why is the MILR separate?**

**The Board letter goes on:**

*The desired outcomes of the MILR Program may include:*

- *Reduced groundwater use*
- *Increased groundwater recharge*
- *Improved baseflows in rivers and streams*
- *Conversion of land to less intensive water uses while maintaining natural and working lands*
- *Creation and/or restoration of wildlife and pollinator habitat and/or migratory resources*
- *Improved water quality* • *Prioritization of lands to be enrolled to maximize benefit to the groundwater basin*
- *Increased community outreach, involvement, and education*
- *Mitigation of groundwater conditions in the basin that pose risks to water adequacy and quality for domestic well users (High Priority)* • *Protection of areas where interconnected surface water and groundwater systems and groundwater dependent ecosystems exist*
- *SGMA compliance*
- *Long-term groundwater basin sustainability*

If a farmer takes land out of irrigated agriculture, what alternative uses will the County allow other than unirrigated agriculture? Could they have a country inn, camp ground, etc.? What if the property is under a Williamson Act contract? Do the properties that will cease any agriculture be reassessed under the full market value for properties in the zone?

Would alternative uses come up against the nuisance aspects of the Right to Farm Ordinance?

**Item 29 - Any Supervisor may ask a question for clarification, make an announcement, or report briefly on his or her activities. In addition, Supervisors may request staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter or may request that staff place a matter of business on a future agenda. Any request to place a matter of business for consideration on a future agenda requires the majority vote of the Board.**

**Added Item 30 - Submittal of a resolution supporting Proposition 36 - “Allows Felony Charges and increases sentences for certain drug and theft crimes. Initiative Statute”, appearing on the November 5, 2024, statewide ballot. This one will probably be approved 4/1, Gibson dissenting. He says there are better laws that could be drafted.**



**Actually, we kind of agree, but a little differently than what Gibson might have in mind.**

ABSENT:

RESOLUTION NO.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING PROPOSITION 36**

The following resolution is hereby offered and read:

**WHEREAS**, Californians statewide will be asked to vote on Proposition 36 – “Allows Felony Charge and Increases Sentences for Certain Drug and Theft Crimes. Initiative Statue” on November 5, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, Proposition 36 makes several key changes related to punishments for theft and drug crimes by increasing punishment for some of these crimes, requiring courts to warn people convicted of selling or providing illegal drugs of future criminal liability, and creating a new treatment-focused court process for some drug possession crimes; and

**WHEREAS**, Proposition 36 has garnered support from Crime Victims United of California, California District Attorneys Association, and Family Business Association of California; and

**WHEREAS**, this proposition, if passed, will undo some of the punishment reductions created by Proposition 47, which passed in 2014, and changed some theft and drug crimes from felonies to misdemeanors; and

**WHEREAS**, this proposition allows felony charges for possessing certain drugs and for thefts under \$950, if defendant has two prior drug or theft convictions; and

**WHEREAS**, this proposition allows felony sentences for theft or damage of property to be lengthened by up to three years if three or more people committed the crime together; and

**WHEREAS**, this proposition allows some of the sentences for selling certain drugs (such as fentanyl, heroin, cocaine, or methamphetamine) to be lengthened based on the amount sold and will generally require those sentences to be served in prison; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition, the proposed ballot measure will:

- Require treatment for some drug possession crimes if a person has two or more prior convictions for some drug crimes
- Require courts to warn people convicted of selling or providing illegal drugs to others that they can be charged with murder if they keep doing so and someone dies

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Luis Obispo, State of California, does hereby support Proposition 36, "Allows Felony Charges and Increases Sentences for Certain Drug and Theft Crimes. Initiative Statute ".

Upon motion of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_, and on the following roll call vote, to-wit:

**Central Coast Community Energy Authority (3CE) Operations Board Meeting of Wednesday, October 9, 2024. (Scheduled)**

**In general:** The meeting is pretty much limited to informational items versus action items. One interesting action item is a revised document called the Energy Risk Management Policy. It seems both very strong and illustrative of the potential problems that can be encountered by a joint powers government provider of electrical services. This is particularly evident in the sections dealing with the procurement and contracting of energy and energy certificates. In some respects the document serves as a code of conduct for all the officials, both at 3CE and the member cities and counties when voting on the large energy contracts.

The intro and draft policy consist of 117 pages. One sections states:

*Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), formerly Monterey Bay Community Power Authority, is a public Joint Powers Authority (JPA) located within the geographic boundaries of Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Benito, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. Member agencies of 3CE include the Counties of Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, San Benito, and Santa Barbara, as well as certain incorporated cities located within the member counties.*

**And**

*Providing retail electric generation service to customers enrolled in the CCA program exposes 3CE, and ultimately the customers it serves, to various significant but manageable risks. The intent of this Energy Risk Management Policy (ERMP) is to provide 3CE, and by extension its customers, with a framework to identify, monitor and manage risks associated with procuring power supplies and operating in wholesale energy markets.*

**And**

*2.2 Risk Catalog This Energy Risk Management Policy addresses the following key risks:*

- a) Customer Opt-Out risk*
- b) Market risk*
- c) Liquidity risk*
- d) Regulatory risk*
- e) Volumetric risk*
- f) Model risk*
- g) Operational risk*
- h) Counterparty & Generalized Credit risk*



Does the former neighborhood advocate who gets elected to a city council and then ends up on the 3CE Board comprehend that he or she is responsible for accountability in a very big time high risk national game that can generate massive liability. Understand that 3CE decisions are not like deciding to update the playground equipment or fire the city manager again. Huge businesses, institutions, and over 1.1 million people are dependent on the systems effective operation.

**A SLO Scenario:** Woops, what if it turns out that one of our big green energy suppliers (\$450,000,000) is actually a front for an invisible New Jersey cartel with Ukrainian ties that has fed millions into the American election process nationally and Statewide, while at the same time bribing a couple of local county supervisors? The Feds have suspended the contract, we are short energy, and the FBI is all over the place. *Well I saved 4 cents per kilowatt hour (\$9/month) for the energy charge component on my bill last month and our school district got a discount on an electric school bus.*

It is one thing to fool around with local cannabis shills and fake developers, for chicken feed, but this is big stuff. Are local officials, with many issues on their plates, able to devote sufficient time to the big leagues?

The Ghost of Adam Hill could be stalking this one.

#### **Item 6 - Update on the implementation of the Community Engagement Plan for the January 2025 Enrollment of the City of Atascadero and the County of San Luis Obispo.**

This is a release of the rollout plan for bringing in the City of Atascadero and the unincorporated territory of SLO County into 3CE on January 1, 2025. Note that the Boards of both jurisdictions have signed all the papers and have taken all the actions necessary to join. The California Public Utilities Commission has also approved the cutover.

**Enrollment Process:** *The two-stage formal enrollment process for Atascadero and SLO County will begin 60 days prior to the start of 3CE service ("pre-enrollment") and end 60 days later ("post-enrollment"), as required by the California Public Utilities Commission. With 3CE service for areas set to start in January 2025 (on customers' regular meter-read dates), pre-enrollment will begin in November 2024, and post enrollment will conclude at the end of March 2025.*

**And**

*The pre-enrollment process will begin with two notification mailers or emails (depending on customer preference) sent to all eligible customers in November and December 2024. As part of post-enrollment, two additional mailers or emails will be sent to all customers in February and March 2025. 3CE began outreach and engagement efforts in the summer of 2024. Direct community engagement, paid advertising, social media, and earned media will follow in early fall 2024. Attached is the timeline of key dates and community engagement opportunities.*

PG&E customers will automatically be enrolled unless they call in and request to opt out. The 3CE write-up states in part:

*You may request to opt out of 3CE at any time by calling (888) 909-6227 or by visiting [3CEnergy.org/opt-out/](https://3CEnergy.org/opt-out/). Please have your PG&E or SCE account information on hand to*

*process your request. There is no fee to opt out before your 3CE service starts or within 60 days after your 3CE service starts. After that time, there is a one-time administrative fee, \$5 for residential accounts and \$25 for commercial accounts. Please be advised that if you do opt out and return to PG&E or SCE, you will not have the option to re-enroll with 3CE for a full year and will be subject to PG&E's or SCE's terms and conditions of service. For information on PG&E's or SCE's terms and conditions, visit [pge.com](http://pge.com) or [sce.com](http://sce.com). Accounts will be transferred on the day the electric meter is read and cannot be transferred during the middle of a billing cycle. Opt-out requests received at least 5 days prior to a customer's meter read date will be processed for that meter read date; all other opt out requests will be processed on the subsequent meter read date. Customers who opt out or otherwise stop receiving service from 3CE will be charged for all 3CE electricity used before ending 3CE electric service.*

### **3CE 2024-25 Enrollment Timeline & Key Dates of Community Engagement Activities**

#### **TIMELINE OF KEY ENROLLMENT DATES:**

October 10	County of San Luis Obispo Enrollment Check-in
October 14	FAQs to City and County Staff
October 21	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in
November	Enrollment Notification 1 of 4 sent out
November	Advertising/Social Media begins
November 14	County of San Luis Obispo Enrollment Check-in
November 20	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in
December	Enrollment Notification 2 of 4 sent out
December 12	County of San Luis Obispo Enrollment Check-in
December 18	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in
January	Enrollment begins
January 9	County of San Luis Obispo Enrollment Check-in
January 15	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in
February	Enrollment Notification 3 of 4 sent out
March	Enrollment Notification 4 of 4 sent out
March 13	County of San Luis Obispo Enrollment Check-in
February 19	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in
March 19	City of Atascadero Enrollment Check-in

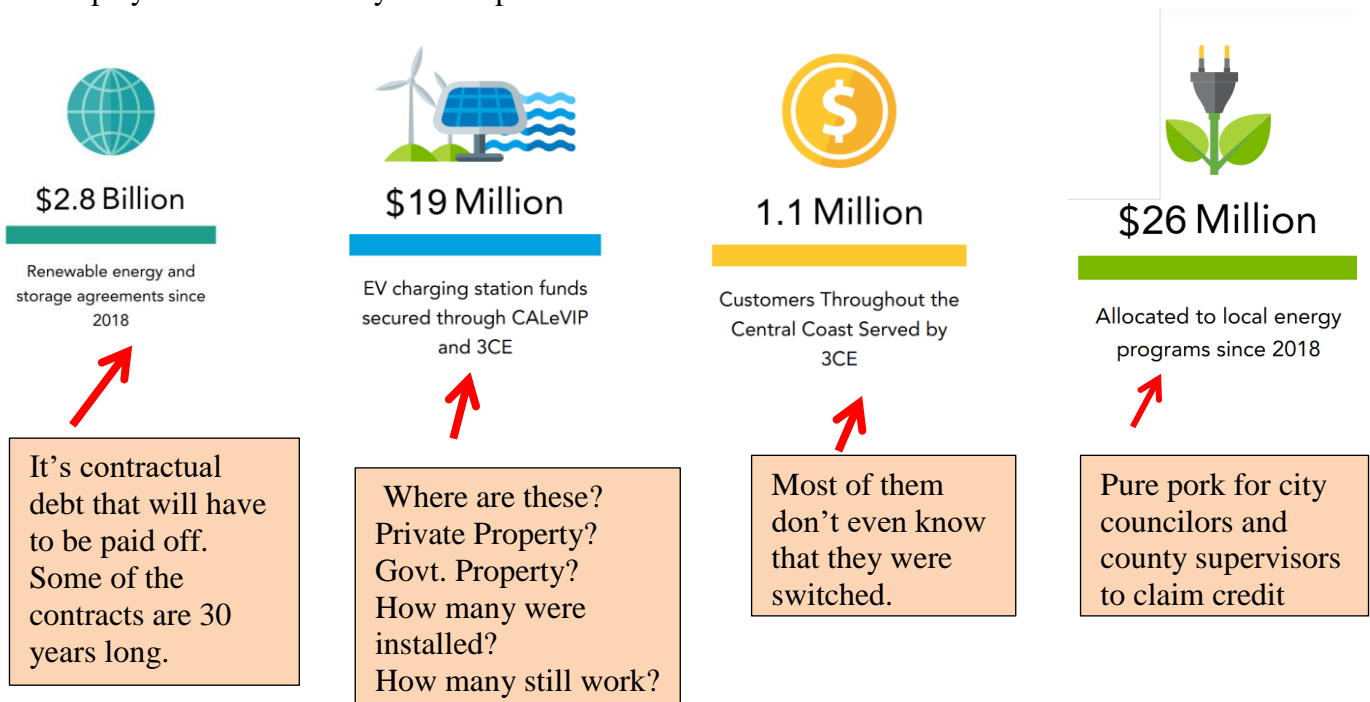
## **SCHEDULED OUTREACH EVENTS:**

Summer	Atascadero "Music in the Park" Concert Series Sponsor (8 events)
August 2024	Atascadero "Summer Movies in the Park" Sponsor (2 events)
August 31	Atascadero "Music in the Park" concert tabling
September 28	Arroyo Grande Harvest Festival parade participant
October	Outreach to media outlets begins, editorial meetings
October 1	Rotary Club of Templeton Presentation
October 2	Rise & Shine, South County" Presentation
October 3	Nipomo Business Community Meeting
October 16	Presentation at "Breakfast on the Bay"
October 17	Atascadero Octoberfest Mixer Sponsor
October 22	Electrify Your Ride Tabling Event
October 23	Rotary Club of Atascadero Rotary Presentation
October 24	Presentation to "Good Morning SLO"
October 25	Paso Robles & Templeton Chamber Corporate Cup Team Building
Sponsor	
October 27	South County Chambers' "Friendsgiving" mixer Presentation
November 1	Rotary Club of Los Osos/Baywood Park Presentation
November 13*	Enrollment Webinar #1
November 14	Kiwanis of Atascadero Presentation
November 21	Atascadero Chamber Mixer Host
November 21	Women in Business Presentation
December	Atascadero Holiday Lighting of Sunken Garden Sponsor
December 3*	Enrollment Webinar #2
December 11	Morro Bay Chamber Mixer Host
January	"Flip Your Switch" Events (dates TBD)
January 8	Home Builders Association of the Central Coast Presentation
January 29*	Enrollment Webinar #3
February 18*	Enrollment Webinar #4

### TO BE SCHEDULED:

Townhalls with county supervisors  
Presentations to Community Service Districts  
Additional Community Service Organizations  
Presentation Community Advisory Committees/Commission  
Presentations to Community-Based Organizations  
Lunch training with City of Atascadero Staff  
Trade Organizations, including contractors and agriculture  
Family Resource Organizations

Free breakfasts, free lunches, sponsored not-for-profit events, and more patronage lubricant than they distribute at a P Diddy house party are going to ease the transition. The 3CE lists the icons displayed below as its key “accomplishments”.



### California Coastal Commission Meeting of Thursday, October 10, 2024 (Scheduled)

**Item Th9a - Increase Space Exploration Technologies' (SpaceX) Falcon 9 launch activities at Vandenberg Space Force Base (VSFB) from 36 to 50 per year.** Somehow, between last month's meeting and today, the staff has changed its recommendation and now recommends that the Commission approve the consistency application of the US Space Force and private contractors to increase the number of launches at Vandenberg. Readers will remember that last month the Commission denied the application and basically invited the Federal Government to sue the Commission. Additionally, the Commissioners became angry when a Space Force Officer would not agree to their interrogation. Now at the end of a fairly brief report that justifies issuance of the consistency determination, the recommendation states:



*Therefore, Commission staff recommends that the Commission concur with DAF consistency determination No. CD-0007-24 and find that the proposed project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the California Coastal Management Program.*

Reading the actual text as well as between the lines, it appears that at least the staff became educated or had a figurative rectal hypersonic missile insertion. Or both. Now instead of language about violations and refusal to allow the commercial launchers to be included in the Space Force permit, the report contains some of the highlights listed below:

*Objectively, the primary purpose of the proposed SpaceX launch activities is to further expand and support SpaceX's commercial satellite internet and telecommunications network, Starlink. Each rocket launch places approximately 21 Starlink satellites into Earth orbit. This network, or "satellite constellation," is now comprised of several thousand individual satellites that provide internet across the globe through a subscription service and are now equipped to support cellular phone service as well. With its Starlink satellite constellation, SpaceX owns significantly more satellites than the combined total owned by every country and other company in the world. Building and maintaining this system and leadership position is the primary purpose for launches and reason for their proposed increase, but SpaceX also periodically launches satellites and payloads under contract for a variety of federal government agencies and private companies as well.*

**And**

*Although the Commission and Commission staff have consistently rejected DAF's characterization of SpaceX launch activities – including those associated with the proposed increase - as a "federal agency activity" as defined in the Coastal Zone Management Act, DAF continues to maintain this stance in the current consistency determination, stating:*

The staff then quotes Airforce ( not Space Force) response in some detail

*SpaceX is currently one of only two U.S. launch service providers certified to launch national security missions for the USSF's National Security Space Launch (NSSL) program, which procures launches for all the military services as well as the intelligence community...*

**And**

*Space launch for the USSF, other DOD organizations, and the intelligence community is reliant on commercial space launch service providers, as DOD does 2 CD-0007-24 (DAF) not operate its own space launch vehicles. SpaceX supports, and is under contract for, the full spectrum of U.S. Government space mission requirements.*

**And**

*SpaceX has developed Starlink and Starshield, satellite constellations in low-Earth orbit that require numerous launches to develop and maintain the constellation. Starlink is a critical national capability that is directly utilized by DOD and the intelligence community, which contracts directly for satellite communications services important to the national defense and in*

support of U.S. interests abroad. Here, Starlink is a services provider for the DOD under numerous contracting vehicles...Starlink is under contract with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of State, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Transportation, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), Customs and Border Patrol, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and many other government organizations at the state and local level...

**And**

*Starlink and Starshield are critical national capabilities that are directly utilized by DOD and the Intelligence Community, who contract directly for satellite communications services important to the national defense, as well as in support of U.S. interests abroad, including in Ukraine... It is critical that CCC generally understand that the distinction between Starshield and Starlink does not exist for some U.S. Government users, and Starlink itself is the basis for exclusive and specialized U.S. Government services and capability.*

*It is in the national interest to continuously enhance Starlink network capacity, particularly in furtherance of U.S. Government purposes and objectives. SpaceX's rapid launch capability and continuous deployment of Starlink satellites on orbit directly correspond to improved network performance that scales directly with network growth to meet escalating demand. Starlink launches are not incidental; each individual Starlink launch is part of a deliberate, planned effort to meet capacity needs to support specific requirements or demand, including the U.S. Government. The capability of new satellites allows SpaceX to add capacity more quickly and interconnect the Starlink constellation, to serve critical U.S. Government needs around the globe, and to launch critical communication services for aviation and maritime in the U.S. and the rest of the world's most remote locations.*

**In other words, some of the Starlink Satellites, as well as the overall private launch capacity, are essential for the national defense. Not only that, the whole network functions as a communications shield.**

It will be interesting to see if the Commission follows its staff recommendation or reverts to its previous position. Again, the public should be outraged and should remove State elected officials who perpetuate this rogue, and now treasonous, bunch of radical environmental hacks who would jeopardize the national defense on the grounds that a few sonic booms may bother Red Legged Frogs. Perhaps they would prefer the complete annihilation of Vandenberg, Nipomo, Lompoc, Santa Maria, Los Alamos, and Santa Ynez by dual air and ground strikes by 2 Chinese or Russian atomic warheads.

## LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

**No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, October 1, 2024 (Not Scheduled)**

## **WARNING: DISASTROUS STATE MANDATE**

**Item F-3 Vehicle Miles Traveled Mitigation Study.** The narrow purpose of the item was to receive authorization to refine some components of the study and recommendations already received. In the end the Board kicked it down the road because, although most of them seem to oppose it (the leftists are less disturbed), it is very difficult to find remedies that could mitigate the bad impacts in SLO County. Fred Strong, Heather Moreno, Ed Waage, Debbie Arnold, and even SLO City's leftist doyenne Andy Pease expressed concern. Of course, Pease beveled her concern on the grounds that the mandate is supposedly greenhouse gas reducing. In the end the Council Board voted to add a few components to the Study. They did not, however, adopt a plan to bring in our State Legislative delegation and "educate" them about the problems. Voters should be enraged that no one will connect the dots. The politics transcends the public interest of the citizens.

**The underlying State mandate and resulting impacts on housing, jobs, and the standard of living are disastrous.**

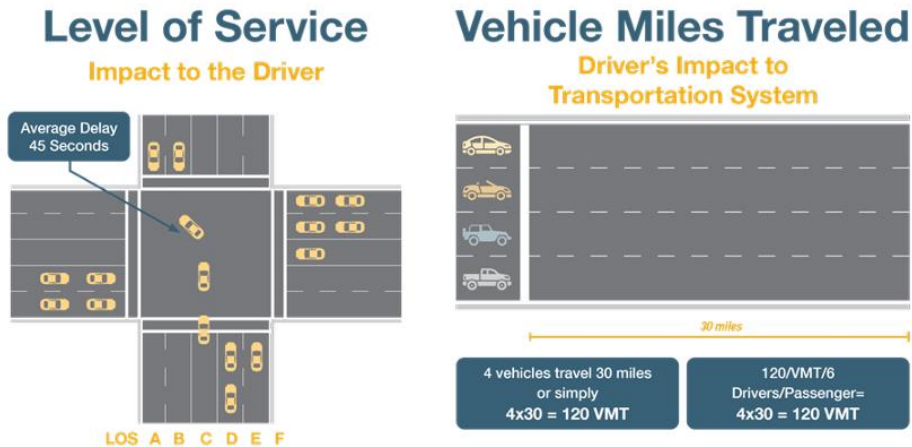
**Background:** Ultimately, the SLOCOG and its member jurisdictions have no choice but to comply with the draconian State law, SB 743, designed to reduce carbon emissions by regulating human freedom of mobility and living choices. A thin majority of the SLOCOG seem to be seeking ways to mitigate the impacts of the law, which is particularly onerous for rural and suburban areas. This has turned out to be much more difficult than originally recognized.

1. Essentially, this is another massive scheme for taxing new homes and commercial development in the name of environmental mitigation of the traffic and the CO<sub>2</sub> impact of new homes, commercial development, and industrial development. The official doctrine states in part:

*California's Senate Bill (SB) 743 represents a significant shift in evaluating transportation impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), moving from congestion measures to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for assessing land use projects and transportation improvements. Historically, transportation impacts were measured using Level of Service (LOS), a concept established in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), which evaluated impacts based on drivers' experiences and assigned grades from "A" to "F." However, focusing on LOS has led to unintended consequences such as urban sprawl, increased vehicular travel (induced demand), and negative impacts on active transportation, public transit, and public health. SB 743 shifts the metric to VMT, a more holistic measure considering the total miles traveled by vehicles due to a project, encouraging urban infill development, and promoting active transportation and transit use. This shift aims to foster sustainable development patterns, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and mitigate environmental impacts associated with vehicular travel. By focusing on VMT, SB 743 aligns with California's broader sustainability goals, creating more sustainable and livable communities through integrated transportation and land use planning. Exhibit ES-1 provides a summary of the differences between LOS and VMT.*

All of this is on top of existing land use fees, CEQA, capital exaction (taxes for infrastructure), affordable housing mandates, special assessments, school fees, and AB 1600 fees.

### Exhibit ES-1 – Level of Service vs. Vehicle Miles Traveled



2. The amount of VMT reduction necessary is first tied to both the types of development (commercial and residential). The consultants developed a model based on the county's projected rate of growth (both incorporated and unincorporated) between now and 2045.

**Table 2 – Potential Land Use Growth and VMT to Mitigate, 2023 to 2045**

VMT Type	Future VMT to Mitigate		
	Residential	Employment	Total
Total VMT (Thru 2045)	446,967	305,507	752,474
Total VMT per Year	20,317	13,887	34,204

The VMT for each new home, home development, commercial use, and industrial use proposed would be calculated. The owner or developer would then be required to figure out how to mitigate the attributed amount.

3. Further complicating the picture is the problem that the metric would also be viewed from a social engineering standpoint of VMT related to “environmental justice” vs. “non-environmental justice.” Environmental justice communities are presumably poor and minority.

**Table 3 – VMT Mitigation Need by Environmental Justice Community**

Community Type	Future VMT to Mitigate		
	Residential	Employment	Total
Environmental Justice	159,353	125,070	284,423
Non-Environmental Justice	287,613	180,437	468,050
Total VMT (Thru 2045)	446,967	305,507	752,474



4. Rates of the number of trips to be reduced or mitigated would be assigned per the sample below.

**Table 4 – Potential Land Use Growth and VMT to Mitigate, 2023 to 2045**

Measure	Residential	Employment
Total Growth in Units (DU/Jobs)	17,920	21,164
Total VMT to be Mitigated (Thru 2045)	446,967	305,507
Average Amount of VMT to Mitigate per Residential Unit/Job*	24.9	19.7
Annual Units Constructed or Jobs Created**, 2021 – 2024	166	196
\$/VMT Reduced	\$1,200/VMT	\$1,200/VMT
Annual Revenue	\$4.97 million	\$4.63 million










5. Adding another layer of complexity is the idea that based on land use, some areas would be required to mitigate more VMT than others. Thus zones would be created. For example, in this model (see the graphic below), the blue zone would have higher rates because it is in a more rural area and more distant from urban areas, and therefore generates longer trips.

**Exhibit 9 – Example VMT Impact Fee Program with Multiple Benefit Areas**

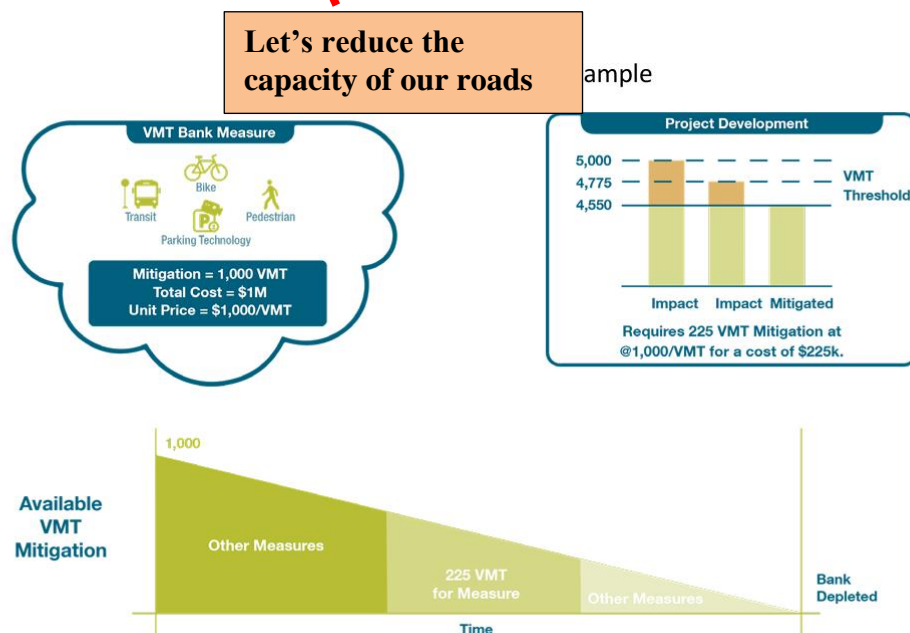


6. Some of the methods of mitigating miles that cannot be eliminated are displayed below.

**Exhibit 3 – VMT Mitigation Measures**

VMT Mitigation Measures		Examples
	Pedestrian	Adding sidewalks or filling in sidewalk gaps
	Bike	New lane miles of bike lanes; filling in gaps in bike infrastructure, or bike share
	Transit	New transit lines, extension of existing service, or adding new service types such as BRT
	Road Diet	Reducing capacity and providing non-auto infrastructure such as protected bike lanes or bus pull outs
	ITS/ TSM	Providing parking wayfinding, optimizing signal systems, providing trip planning services
	Mobility Hub	Provide infrastructure to link multiple types of transportation modes
	Affordable Housing	Providing affordable housing in dense areas, transit-oriented development, or other affordable housing supportive needs
	Vanpool/Carpool	Implement regionwide vanpool and carpool programs or expand existing programs
	Park-and-Ride	Construct park-and-ride lots to increase trip occupancy

7. These would be assigned VMT reduction values. Developers would then have to include them in the costs of their projects or pay into a regional mitigation bank in order to receive project approval.



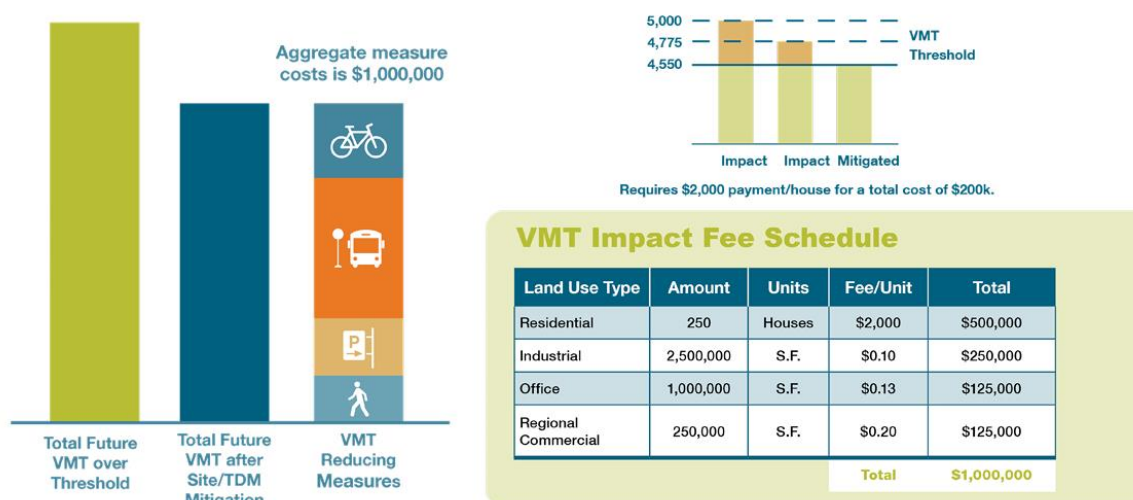
To establish a VMT mitigation bank, the following steps are undertaken, as shown in Exhibit 6:

1. Identify VMT-reducing mitigation measures, such as bicycling facilities, pedestrian infrastructure, and public transit.
2. Evaluate these mitigation measures to determine the extent of VMT reduction.

3. Combine the VMT reductions from all mitigation measures to calculate the total mitigated VMT (e.g., 1,000 VMT).
4. Sum up the costs associated with all mitigation measures (e.g., \$1 million).
5. Calculate the cost per VMT reduced by dividing the total mitigation measure cost by the total VMT reduction (e.g., \$1,000 per VMT).

Once the cost per VMT is established and the VMT bank is operational, a development project can offset its VMT impact by paying a per VMT fee to the bank. For instance, if a project needs to reduce its VMT impact by 225 VMT to meet the respective agency's VMT threshold requirements, the total fee would be \$225,000, calculated by multiplying the cost per VMT reduced (\$1,000) by the total VMT needing to be reduced (225 VMT). **Once the total available VMT is used up by development projects purchasing VMT from the bank, new VMT mitigation measures would need to replenish the VMT bank.**

**EXHIBIT 8 – VMT Impact Fee Example**



There is no indication in the write-up that the current road fees assessed for development impact would go away. The community will still need improved roads, traffic safety improvements, and so on.

A new bureaucracy would need to be created to manage the system. The consultant report points to a new joint powers authority.

When considering the administration of a VMT mitigation program, the structure of the program is the first thing that needs to be determined. Based on feedback received from the Steering Committee, SLOCOG is situated to oversee and administer a VMT mitigation program with the approval of mitigation projects provided by a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) comprised of SLOCOG's member agencies. It is recommended that the JPA be represented by the SLOCOG Board of Directors, which includes representatives from all eight of SLOCOG's member agencies. **Huh???**

### **SLOCOG Should:**

1. Develop some estimates of how much this new regulatory scheme will add to the cost of a home, commercial development, etc.
2. Determine the likely impacts on the achievement of Housing Element goals.
3. Summon in State Representative Dawn Addis, State Representative Gregg Hart, and State Senator John Laird to a public Board meeting and present them with all the problems.
4. The report should be scheduled and presented in a council meeting in each city, as well as a Board of Supervisors meeting. This is too serious to be delegated out.

### **See the full report here:**

[F-3 Attachment SLO Regional VMT Mitigation Program Final Report.pdf](#)

## **EMERGENT ISSUES**

**Item 1 - Interactive Database Reveals which Local Governments are Fiscally Sound or at High-Risk of Fiscal Crisis – SLO County Graded “D”** The California Policy Center has released its grades on the fiscal condition of California’s counties, cities, and school districts. The article below introduces the process and grading system. This is followed by tables explaining SLO County’s overall grade of D.

*Sacramento — California Policy Center today released a new Local Fiscal Health Dashboard that tracks the financial health of California cities, counties and school districts. The interactive database allows users to track how elected officials are managing local budgets, support ongoing budget decision making and identify financial red flags.*

*The new dashboard is especially timely for California voters who will have local tax and bond measures on their November ballots. Each city, county and school district has been awarded a fiscal health score and letter grade from A to F, depending on how well they have managed their finances. Government entities are also identified and color-coded as low, moderate or high risk for fiscal distress.*

*The Local Fiscal Health Dashboard fills a void in government transparency data left after the California State Auditor’s Office unexpectedly discontinued its popular Local Government High-Risk Dashboard last October. California Policy Center’s new dashboard was created to replace and expand on that data to ensure local governments maintain transparency and accountability when it comes to their budgets.*



*CPC’s dashboard uses public data from Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports (ACFR) that local governments are required to submit every year to get access to federal funds. The dashboard provides key financial metrics to allow local elected officials, analysts, reporters and citizens to understand how cities are performing overall and in comparison to other cities, and spotlight concerning financial trends.*

*“The public should have access to the tools necessary to ensure government budgets are transparent and government officials are held accountable,” Christensen said. “Californians can’t allow government officials to sweep bad fiscal news under the rug.”*

*Tracking local financial metrics, such as liabilities and revenue trends, is crucial. California has over \$1.6 trillion in unfunded liabilities (debt) at both state and local levels. Many cities have potentially catastrophic unfunded pension liabilities. Other municipalities are making budget decisions based on incomplete, missing or delayed financial reports.*

*Cities are required to file their ACFRs — often referred to as annual audits — every year. Most municipalities submit their ACFRs within nine months of fiscal year end (as required by the federal and state governments), but many others are routinely — and egregiously — late in filing their required annual financial reports. That means local officials are left to make budgeting decisions without current fiscal information.*



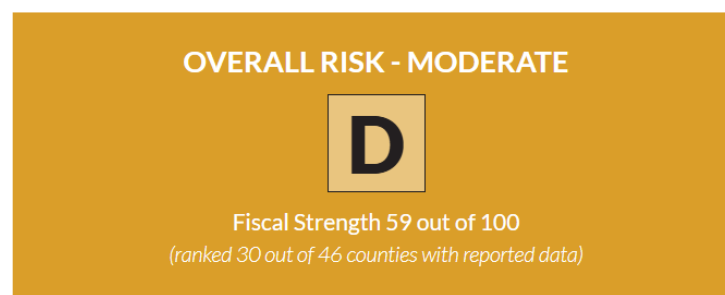
**The Data is based on the County’s 2022 – 23 Budget and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).**

## **LOCAL FISCAL HEALTH DASH BOARD**

### **SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY**

**2023 / 2022**

[Methodology, Glossary, & Tutorial](#)



The overall fiscal strength score aggregates ten dimensions of financial strength into a single score that ranges from 0 (worst) to 100 (best). It provides a summary of the overall fiscal standing.

## GENERAL FUND RESERVES

**D**

10.49 out of 15

Measures how much funds the government has at its disposal to quickly address any liabilities that arise without a renewed appropriation of funds.

General Fund Reserves

**\$424.019M**

General Fund Transfers

**\$-46.647M**

*(to other governmental funds [expressed as a negative value])*

Total General Fund Expenditures

**\$638.682M**

General Fund Reserves Ratio

**0.62**

## DEBT BURDEN

**D**

10.06 out of 15

Measures the government's obligations relative to its revenues.

Government-wide Long-Term Obligations

**\$643.147M**

*(unrelated to pension obligations or other post-employment benefits [OPEB])*

Government-wide Total Revenue

**\$811.79M**

Debt Burden Ratio

**0.79**

## LIQUIDITY

**A**

10 out of 10

Measures the degree to which governments have access to liquid assets to cover any immediate cash outflow.

General Fund Cash and Cash Equivalents

**\$514.748M**

General Fund Investments

**\$0M**

General Fund Total Liabilities

**\$94.105M**

Liquidity Ratio

**5.47**

## REVENUE TRENDS

**D**

3.03 out of 5

Measures the average growth rate of revenues over the last three years.

General Fund Total Revenue

**\$662.45M**

Revenue Growth Ratio

**0.04**

## PENSION COSTS

### D

2.68 out of 5

Measures the fraction of the revenues that is consumed to fund pension obligations and thus the fiscal burden that pension cost exert.

Pension Actuarially Required Contributions

**\$67.739M**

Government-wide Total Revenue

**\$811.79M**

Pension Actuarially Determined Contributions Ratio

**0.08**

## PENSION OBLIGATIONS

### F

0 out of 10

Measures the net pension obligations relative to the government-wide revenues.

Net Pension Liability

**\$-928.838M**

Government-wide Total Revenue

**\$811.79M**

Pensions Obligation Ratio

**1.14**

## OPEB OBLIGATIONS

**A**

9.66 out of 10

Measure of unfunded other post employment benefit (OPEB) obligations as a share of annual government-wide revenues.

OPEB Total Liabilities

**\$52.315M**

Government-wide Total Revenue

**\$811.79M**

OPEB Obligation Ratio

**0.03**

## OPEB FUNDING

**F**

2.38 out of 5

Measures the degree to which a government fully funds its other post employment benefit (OPEB) liabilities.

OPEB Fiduciary Net Position

**\$24.921M**

OPEB Total Liabilities

**\$52.315M**

OPEB Funding Ratio

**0.48**

## NET WORTH

**F**

4.75 out of 15

Rates the size of a government's unrestricted net position relative to the government-wide revenues

Government Unrestricted Net Assets

**\$-297.796M**

Government-wide Total Revenue

**\$811.79M**

Net Worth Ratio

**-0.37**

Methodology source: Giesecke, Oliver and Duffy, Seamus, *State and Local Government Financial Fundamentals* (September 7, 2023). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4565350> or <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4565350> This tool is available for free public use. If you would like to further the work of government transparency, you can support California Policy Center [here](#) ;

[CPC Launches Local Fiscal Health Dashboard for California's Cities, Counties and School Districts \(californiapolicycenter.org\)](https://californiapolicycenter.org)



## 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**

## AMERICA DOESN'T NEED MORE "EFFICIENT" GOVERNMENT

***ITS TRUE PURPOSE IS TO TRANSFER AS MUCH MONEY AND POWER  
AS POSSIBLE TO POLITICIANS, FEDERAL AGENCIES, AND THE  
POLITICALLY-CONNECTED RICH  
AND IN THAT PURSUIT, THE GOVERNMENT IS WILDLY EFFICIENT***  
BY CONNOR O'KEEFE

Last month, Donald Trump announced that he intends to set up a government efficiency commission if he wins a second term. The commission would be led by tech entrepreneur Elon Musk, who would audit the entire federal government to find and eliminate inefficiencies that needlessly cost taxpayers trillions of dollars.

While Austrian economists tend to be wary of the entire concept of "efficiency" in a world without perfect, universal knowledge of the future and static, unanimously agreed-upon goals, it's hard to label the federal government's record at effectively using tax dollars to solve problems as anything short of abysmal.

For decades, the federal government has repeatedly set out to allegedly address societal problems by pouring absurd amounts of money into them, only to see the problems get worse.

There are far too many examples to list here, but to name a few—the War on Poverty was implemented in the 1960s with the stated aim of reducing dependency on government programs. After implementation, the level of government dependency shot up, and the poverty rate, which had previously been falling, began climbing again. Around the same time, the government rolled out programs that were presented as ways to make higher education more affordable. Similar federal efforts have been implemented or expanded in the 1990s and 2010s. Over that same period, the price of a college degree has skyrocketed.

The same thing happened after the federal government started to address the affordability of healthcare and the accessibility of home ownership. In 1913, the establishment of the Federal Reserve was meant to usher in a period of economic stability but instead kicked off the most dramatic series of booms and busts in history. And the last two decades of American military intervention in the Middle East was meant to bring peace to the region and "rid the world of terrorists." But today, the ideology of Osama bin Laden is significantly more popular than it was in 2001, and the region is still consumed by violence.

To call the federal government's performance on these and other programs "inefficient" or even counterproductive is a serious understatement. Government involvement in all the above areas has been cataclysmic, which brings us to the first problem with the Trump-Musk efficiency commission: the scale is far too limited.

Trump and Musk have set their planned commission's sights on improper federal payments. While this certainly is a problem, with an estimated \$236 billion in improper payments made last year (virtually all of which were overpayments), the issue is tiny compared to the programs outlined above—most of which are ongoing.

It is also important to understand that, as worthwhile as it is to point out the many shortcomings and outright destructive consequences of current government programs, the ideal of an "efficient" government is impossible. As Mises, Rothbard, and others have explained in detail, the very characteristics that make something a government also ensure it will be terrible at allocating resources. Governments are immune from economic losses, attain capital through seizure, are often operating without a price system to guide them, and are directed by decision-makers who are institutionally protected from the consequences of being wrong.

But the biggest mistake made by Trump, Musk, and anyone else arguing we need to make government more efficient is taking the political class at its word. Politicians, bureaucrats, and big political donors may *say* they want government policies that tackle the many problems facing the American people—and a couple of them may genuinely believe it. But, at the same time, federal policies have not only failed to fix, but worsened so many of our problems, those same policies have made the political class—which includes the politically-connected rich—a tremendous amount of money. At the very least, it should not be taken as a given that this is an accident.

There absolutely is value in Elon Musk leading an efficiency commission that audits the federal government. Anything that exposes and wakes people up to the waste and deficiencies at the heart of our political system is productive. But don't be fooled by claims of incompetence. The true purpose of our monstrosity of a political system is not to accomplish the nice-sounding goals politicians talk about. It's to transfer as much money and power as possible to politicians, federal agencies, and the politically-connected rich. And in that pursuit, the government is wildly efficient.

*Connor O'Keeffe (@ConnorMOKeeffe) produces media and content at the Mises Institute. He has a master's in economics and a bachelor's in geology. This article first appeared in the Mises Wire of October 2, 2024.*

## **LIFE IN KAMALA'S CALIFORNIA**

***A Harris administration will impose California's soft tyranny on the entire nation while her cronies laugh all the way to the bank***

**BY EDWARD RING**

It's election season, and because California is a one-party state, we don't see very many campaign ads for Kamala Harris. But ballot initiatives are another story. One hotly contested

ballot initiative, Proposition 33, if approved by voters, will enable California's cities and counties to impose rent control. How the rent control advocates make their case is typical. Greed and oppression against hapless, helpless, innocent victims. But the government is here to help!

Ads in favor of Prop. 33 are masterpieces in emotional imagery. One after another, a diverse collection of beleaguered tenants appear on the television screen, each of them repeating the phrase "The rent's too high." Another ad promoting a yes vote on Prop. 33 follows the same pattern, but this time, one after another, a collection of forlorn tenants asks, "Where will I live?" while superimposed on the screen is written, "Average Rent, \$2,800."

In both cases, viewers are advised to "vote for rent control."

The naked dishonesty of these ads is lost on most Californians. They have been conditioned to believe that high home prices and high monthly rents are the result of price gouging by greedy landlords when in reality there is a housing shortage because the Democratic majority in the state legislature has passed countless laws that make it almost impossible to get permits to build homes. No wonder the median price for a home in California is \$904,000.

Vote for Kamala Harris and the machine she represents, and watch this happen to the whole country.

If there were a competitive market for housing in California, such as there still is in most so-called red states, housing would be affordable for middle-income people to rent or buy. But it is government greed and overreach, not only at the state level but in every city and county, which has created the housing shortage.

The same phenomenon occurs with gasoline in California, where more than a third of the price per gallon goes to cover taxes, almost all of them for state programs. But instead of backing off of its regulatory war on refineries and in-state producers, the governor is holding hearings on "price gouging" by the refineries, alleging that they engage in deliberate shutdowns for maintenance in order to create shortages and high prices. Never mind that California's gasoline price fluctuations track in precise alignment with fluctuations in the price of crude oil.

In every essential sector of California's economy—starting with the fundamentals of energy, water, food, transportation, and housing—out-of-control government regulations have paralyzed investment and innovation. They have rendered the state unaffordable for low and middle-income households, and in response, the state expanded its aid programs and subsidies.

What has happened in California is going to happen to the entire nation if Kamala Harris is elected president, because she is a quintessential example of someone who is a product of the state's Democratic political machine. What has happened in California is an alliance of unionized state bureaucrats with politically connected businesses seeking government subsidies. Other special interests also benefit—environmentalist lobbyists, social justice activists, public service NGOs, trial lawyers—but the core relationship is a partnership between a government that serves itself and crony businesses that have the economies of scale to withstand the punitive regulations and thrive on the subsidies.

The only honest assertion that proponents of a rent control initiative make in their campaign ads is the fact that rent is too high in California. But rent control will make things even worse. As it

is, most developers will not do business in California. Why try to build a subdivision in Silicon Valley, where the permits may take 10-20 years to get approved, when they can go to Texas and get plans approved in 10-20 weeks? Why build anything in a state where at any moment another environmentalist organization can file a lawsuit that will take millions of dollars and several years to resolve?

If Prop. 33 passes, developers of multi-family housing will have to contend with the fact that rental income will not be permitted to keep pace with market rates, something that will not only discourage buyers but also disincentivize any ongoing investments in maintenance and upgrades to the properties. Rent control will make California's housing shortage worse.

How California has coped with its housing shortage so far is an object lesson of how the government steps in to solve a problem it created and then makes the problem worse. When combining state and local funding, California has easily spent more than \$30 billion of taxpayer money on "permanent supportive housing" for the state's homeless, only to see the population of unsheltered homeless hit 186,000 this year, a new record. The money has passed into the hands of developers, bureaucrats, and service NGOs, and after everyone has taken their cut, the construction costs average over \$500,000 per unit, with perpetual costs for management and services for the tenants.

California's "affordable housing" projects have consumed even greater quantities of state and local tax revenue. Nobody has ever come up with a precise estimate but it's well beyond the \$30 billion spent for the homeless. Estimated spending for affordable housing just in 2023 is over \$18 billion. In just one year. This spending comes in the form of subsidies and tax incentives granted to developers who cannot possibly build homes or apartments that people can afford and still make a profit. Then the tenants themselves receive additional taxpayer funds in order to afford their monthly rent.

And yet, this is Harris's explicit, often stated, "holistic" solution to unaffordable homes and rents. More subsidies to developers to construct "affordable housing" and more subsidies to tenants to pay the monthly rent. Deregulating the industry would quickly end America's housing shortage, cost taxpayers nothing, and restore the American dream of owning a home. But that wouldn't benefit the bureaucrats or the cronies that control the one-party machine.

California's cities may not be quite as bad, at least not everywhere, as conservative critics claim, but they're undeniably a mess. The City of Oakland is a poster child for local government dysfunction. Losing both of their professional sports teams is a high-profile example of failed leadership. They just lost the Oakland A's after 57 years of residency. And since 2020, the Oakland Raiders have been the Las Vegas Raiders. Losing these iconic teams is just a symptom of a systemic collapse. The city of Oakland is falling apart. Crime is rampant. The city faces a budget crisis. And meanwhile, they are pioneering payments for "universal basic income" and "universal basic mobility."

In general, California's major cities are controlled by social justice activists who don't have even a remote understanding of how to govern. They attract massive political contributions from the public employee unions representing the workers they're supposedly going to oversee. And as long as they rubber stamp every wage and benefit demand these unions make, they're free to pass as many ridiculous ordinances as they wish. After all, the more repressive these cities get on their march towards utopia, the more public servants will be necessary for enforcement.

Such is life in Kamala’s California. State directives now intrude into trivial details of daily life. If you refuse to put your kitchen scraps in your “organics” bin instead of the trash bin, you are a climate denier, and you will be fined. After all, all that discarded broccoli and chicken bones in a landfill might make methane, a greenhouse gas! Similar approbation will fall upon you if you object to the recent ban on plastic bags, and never mind their utility or the fact that almost everything in the civilized world is made out of plastic.

But reality isn’t real in California. Their current attorney general, Rob Bonta, has just sued Exxon for “deceiving the public on recyclability of plastic products.” For Bonta, already salivating over his chances to become California’s next governor in 2026, this is a publicity stunt that may yield a profitable settlement for his agency. But for the rest of us, it is yet another example of a one-party state government that engages in relentless harassment of its productive citizens and companies. California’s Democratic politicians are determined to micromanage every aspect of the economic life of the state’s businesses and households.

Voters in America should understand that this national election is not just about social issues. They are of vital importance, but must not overshadow what else is at stake: our economic freedom. A Harris administration will impose California’s soft tyranny on the entire nation while her cronies laugh all the way to the bank.

*Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. He is also the director of water and energy policy for the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. Ring is the author of Fixing California: Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism (2021) and The Abundance Choice: Our Fight for More Water in California (2022).*

## ADDENDUM I

### NOVEMBER STATE PROPOSITION RECOMMENDATIONS (Next Page)



Proposition	VOTE	WHAT IS IT?	WHY?
Prop 2	NO	Piles on \$20 Billion to existing out-of-control State Debt	Additional State Debt on top of existing current fiscal year debt of \$40 Billion and \$10 Billion in Local Debt for new school construction also on the ballot,
Prop 3	NO	Repeals Prop 8 same sex marriage ban	Unnecessary in view of federal court ruling
Prop 4	NO	Piles on another \$20 Billion to State Debt	See comment above on Prop 2.
Prop 5	NO!	Guts Prop 13's key 2/3ds vote	Adds housing and "infrastructure" projects to local bond measures that would be subject to lower 55% approval threshold.
Prop 6	NO!	Severely restricts requiring prison inmates to work	Slavery was prohibited after 1863. This would allow prisoners to refuse work requirements.
Prop 32	NO!	State minimum wage of \$18/hour. Job killer that will bankrupt many small businesses.	State minimum wage is currently \$14.50/hour. State law imposing \$25/hour minimum wage for restaurant and health care workers already is killing jobs as well as bankrupting the restaurant industry and public and private hospitals.
Prop 33	NO!	Will destroy rental housing industry, worsen current state housing shortage, and put middle class home ownership out of reach.	Eliminates current state law exceptions to statewide and local rent control laws.
Prop 34	YES	Prevents Foundation that uses federal drug subsidies from misusing funds to promote apartment rent control	AIDS Health Care Foundation has spent hundreds of millions on sponsoring unrelated state and local rent control initiatives.
Prop 35	NO	Eliminates Legislature's discretion to use MediCal tax funds to cover general fund budget deficits	Permanently allocates existing tax from use for low income medical care.
Prop 36	YES!	Tough measures to combat retail theft and fentanyl possession and sales.	Also mandates fixed prison sentences for retail theft crimes based on property and mandates drug treatment for multiple offenses and higher penalties if treatment is rejected.



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*(Sustaining Membership includes a table of 10 at the Annual Fundraiser Dinner)*

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