



Weekly Update
November 10-17, 2025

Dana Reserve Survives Grumpy No-Growthers

The Dana Reserve project received tentative approval from the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors in a 3-2 vote at the November 4 meeting. Final approval needs to take place at the November 18 meeting in order to comply with legal noticing requirements. The final vote, however, should be procedural in nature.

As predicted, Supervisor Gibson put on a song and dance routine. First, he continued on his rant regarding the private settlement agreement. After exhausting that topic, he moved on to gripe about the loss of homes from the settlement and how that loss, replaced by some property set aside for environmental preserves is a bad deal for “the people”.

He voted against the previous plan last fall and now voted against the current plan because it isn’t as good as the previous one! He failed to clarify why he is so obsessed with the private settlement but had the audacity to say that he would entertain a “contribution of three million dollars” from the developer for low-income housing support.

Supervisor Paulding voiced concern over the proposed property set-aside for the Cuesta College campus, wanting to be sure that if Cuesta opted to locate elsewhere, that the property be made available for the YMCA or a similar community activity center. So, while opposing the project, he still wanted to put conditions on it. Paulding finished his comments by saying that the development is too large.

Public comments on the Dana Reserve project amounted to just three speakers who all spoke in favor. The main theme of the comments was that this project sets the tone for future projects around San Luis Obispo County – its passage or failure lets builders know whether it's wise to invest in future projects, or to go elsewhere. Hopefully the message is positive.

Fiscal Forecast Not Trending Well

County staff presented a report regarding the County's Fiscal Year 2026-27 and Multi-Year financial forecast. The best way to describe the presentation is to say it was "guarded".

The following were the general trends identified:

FY 2026-27 General Fund Forecast

- Higher level of uncertainty
- Financial Rebalancing and Resilience Initiative (Year 2)
- Forecast continues to present a challenging picture
- Continued constrained revenue growth with expenditures outpacing revenues
- Future enactment of Board-adopted "Budget Goals and Policies" and "Budget Balancing Strategies and Approaches" will be essential in addressing expected budget gaps

The fourth point is the most concerning. Constrained revenue growth with expenditures outpacing revenues means we are spending more than we are taking in. Here is a look at our revenues:

Revenue Assumptions

Financing Source Category	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Forecast	\$ Diff	% Diff
Fund Balance Available (FBA)	\$51.8M	\$47.5M	-\$4.3M	-8.3%
Non-Departmental Revenue	\$296.9M	\$304.5M	\$7.6M	2.6%
Departmental Revenue	\$438.2M	\$426.2M	-\$12M	-2.7%
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$786.9M	\$778.2M	-\$8.7M	-1.1%
Cancelled Reserves	\$30.2M	\$1.1M	-\$29.1M	-96.4%
Total Financing Sources	\$817.1M	\$779.3M	-\$37.8M	-4.6%

On the expenditure side, forecast apparently used great restraint. Recall that the current budget, while cutting \$38 million, still grew by almost 9% over the previous fiscal year. Reductions in the scale reflected in the forecast illustrated below would call for some stark cuts:

Expenditure Assumptions

Expenditure Category	2025-26 Budget	2026-27 Forecast	\$ Diff	% Diff
Salaries and Benefits	\$423.6M	\$430.5M	\$6.9M	1.6%
Non-Salaries	\$352.0M	\$317.6M	-\$34.4M	-9.8%
Contingencies	\$37.3M	\$37.4M	\$0.07M	0.2%
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$812.9M	\$785.5M	-\$27.4M	-3.4%
New Reserves	\$4.1M	\$1.3M	-\$2.8M	-68.0%
Total Expenditures	\$817.1M	\$786.8M	-\$30.3M	-3.7%

The final point of the summary listed above calls out the Board of Supervisors for guidance with priorities because staff know that cuts or adjustments will need to be made in order to deliver a balanced budget.

While it seems that Board Members are hopeful that improvements in Department of Health financial procedures (brought about through the KPMG audits) will improve revenues in that category, simple extrapolations would indicate that there are some difficult decisions for the Board of Supervisors as they consider where cuts may need to be made.

Here is the bottom line of the forecast (assuming everything stays on track):

FY 2026-27 General Fund Budget Forecast

\$779,318,475	Total financing sources (revenues)
<u>\$786,832,072</u>	<u>Total financing uses (expenditures)</u>
(\$7,513,597)	Total forecast surplus/(gap)

Forecasted Range
=
Gap of \$4-\$11 million

While a gap of \$4 – 11 million doesn't seem alarming for a \$1 billion budget, it does indicate a trend line that has the potential to get worse and seems to call for budgetary constraint.

The entire report can be found at:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/19590>

Coastal Commission Pauses

The November 6 California Coastal Commission hearing on the application for a 20-year extension for the operations of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant was a long

and often redundant discussion involving nearly 100 comments from the public and elected officials. Staff recommendation was to grant the necessary permits with conditions put on the lands surrounding the plant for conservation and mitigation purposes. By the end of a long day, commissioners opted to delay their decision pending further negotiations about the land set-asides.

Public comments ranged from supporters pointing out the need for clean reliable power and the significant contribution to the local economy to opponents dragging out the tired old arguments of seismic concerns and spent fuel storage. Somewhere in the middle there were concerns about which lands would be subject to conservation and how that would happen.

One big question that never seemed to be fully addressed was that of the fate of Cherry Valley. A recent court decision has granted a lease holder about 150 years life to its lease, but many environmentalists didn't understand or care and demanded that that land be included in conservation plans.

State Senator John Laird, who has part of San Luis Obispo in his large district, submitted a six-page letter calling for a more stringent land conservation program. His letter became a rallying point for many including State Assemblywoman Dawn Addis and County Supervisor Bruce Gibson.

Another convoluted issue was that of tribal land. The Yak Tityu Tityu yak Tiłhini Northern Chumash Tribe, also known as the YTT Northern Chumash Tribe, pushed hard for a return of much of the land surrounding the power plant. Other representatives from the Chumash tribe also made similar requests, but the two seemed to be in some sort of rivalry.

One common theme among those calling for greater levels of conservation was funding. Practically every advocate called for additional endowment funding for trail maintenance and habitat restoration. No mention was made of funding sources nor did anybody volunteer to do the fundraising.

Some of the more ambitious opponents called for mitigation in the form of artificial reefs, filters for sea water inlets and/or cooling towers.

There was a strong pattern of aspirational forecasts of wind and solar energy sources meeting and in some cases exceeding California's electrical power grid needs before 2030, but specifics were scarce.

For now, Coastal Commission staff are setting meetings with PG&E to ascertain whether adjustments can be made to the land conservation aspects of the agreement. We will provide details on the next steps and as always, will invite and encourage your participation.

Fee Increases Coming

One significant source of income for county government is the charge of fees for services provided. County staff brought forward at the November 4 Board of Supervisors meeting a proposed update for fees charged for various county services. This is a response to suggestions that the county should endeavor to achieve full recovery of the costs of the various services that it offers.

To many, this begs the question of why we need to pay county taxes in the first place. It is a fair question to ask; if we are charged full cost for a service, where did the tax revenue go that used to cover those costs? It is also reasonable to point out that it isn't fair for all taxpayers to shoulder the cost for all services when they may only use a few.

These questions bring up the challenge of recovering extraordinary costs while still providing basic services. In its 74 page report, county staff provided detailed breakdowns of fees currently charged and the proposed changes.

Most fees naturally went up, but a few were decreased. Some of the standouts include EMT Certification going from \$31 to \$115 (70% increase), Tobacco Retail Licensing from \$1,268 to \$2,055 (62% increase) and a Gun Permit from \$100 to \$300 (300% increase).

Included in the proposal were various building fees, but they were set aside so that they could be reviewed after the KPMG audit of that department is completed.

A few examples of the fee schedules and proposals follow:

Changing Fees

Due to the use of the new fee model, the department is proposing to increase 148 out of the current 247 fees, with an average increase of 90.4%. The table below provides an overview of the fees increasing by fee grouping and the percentage increase for each fee grouping.

Average Fee Increases by Fee Grouping		
Fee Grouping	% Change	Explanation
New Construction Plan Check and Inspection Fees	20.1%	Increase in Salaries, CPI, and other related changes
Fixed Fees _ Mechanical	115.2%	
Fixed Fees _ Plumbing/Gas	69.1%	
Fixed Fees _ Electrical	96.6%	
Fixed Fees _ Grading	106.5%	
Fixed Fees _ Building Miscellaneous	81.1%	
Fixed Fees _ Other Building (Fire-rated and Time extension)	112.8%	

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Significant Fee Increases				
Fee Indicator No.	Fee	FY 25-26 Fee	Proposed FY 26-27 Fee	% Change
4000 - VETS/COMMUNITY BUILDINGS-Full Day Use				
4002	Main Hall and Right Wing	\$1,105.00 per day	\$1,700.00 per day	54%
4003	Main Hall and Right Wing, Non Profit/Governmental Entity	\$550.00 per day	\$850.00 per day	55%
5000 - VETS/COMMUNITY BUILDINGS-Hourly Use				
5001	Main Hall and Right Wing	\$220.00 per hour	\$340.00 per hour	55%
5002	Main Hall and Right Wing, Non Profit/Governmental Entity	\$110.00 per hour	\$170.00 per hour	55%

Significant Fee Decreases					
Fee Indicator No.	Fee	FY 25-26 Fee	Proposed FY 26-27 Fee	% Change	Explanation
4006	Cannabis Tax Compliance Program	\$4,324	\$2,304	(47%)	Fee is decreasing due to the decision to withdraw from the California Cannabis Authority (CCA). The withdrawal will be effective at the end of FY 25-26.

Significant Fee Increases				
Fee Indicator No.	Fee	FY 25-26 Fee	Proposed FY 26-27 Fee	% Change
11004	Livestock/Domestic Large (Horse/Cattle/Etc.)	\$210.00	\$240.00	14.3%
12000 - DISPOSAL FEE				
12001	Under 10 pounds	\$79.00	\$93.00	17.7%
12002	10-50 pounds	\$79.00	\$93.00	17.7%
12003	51-90 pounds (2 person) Modified Weight	\$117.00	\$134.00	14.5%
12004	91-150 pounds (2 persons)	\$117.00	\$134.00	14.5%
13000 - CITATION /FINES				
13001	Potentially Dangerous Dog Fee	\$580.00	\$695.00	19.8%
13002	Vicious Dog	\$465.00	\$560.00	20.4%
13003	PDD License Surcharge	\$150.00	\$182.00	21.3%
14000 - NUISANCE ABATEMENT				
14001	Substantiated Nuisance Abatement Investigation	\$580.00	\$700.00	20.7%
16000 - PERMITS				
16001	Commercial Kennel & Pet Shop	\$290.00	\$330.00	13.8%
16002	Hobby Breeder (for 2 litters per year)	\$174.00	\$212.00	21.8%
16007	Each additional litter	\$47.00	\$58.00	23.4%
16008	Non-Commercial Multiple Animal Owned	\$174.00	\$212.00	21.8%
18000 - SERVICES OFFERED				
18002	Officer Call Out- Non Emergency	\$60.00	\$73.00	21.7%

If you find yourself doing something that requires a fee paid to the county, be prepared to see an increase. For the entire report, go to:

<https://agenda.slocounty.ca.gov/iip/sanluisobispo/agendaitem/details/19593>

Prop 50 Results

It seems a little introspection would be in order for those that opposed Proposition 50. That so many people supported the measure without consideration about whether it was good policy tells us something about the electorate's state of mind. This is reinforced by election results from around the country.

Here are the unofficial results from San Luis Obispo County:

PROPOSITION 50 (Vote for 1)

Precincts Reported: 93 of 93 (100.00%)

	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
Times Cast	4,537	84,800	89,337	/ 182,200 49.03%
Undervotes	2	72	74	
Overvotes	0	8	8	
<hr/>				
Candidate	Polling	Vote by Mail	Total	
YES	1,666	48,376	50,042	56.07%
NO	2,869	36,344	39,213	43.93%
Total Votes	4,535	84,720	89,255	

Final certified results may take another week or two. For those still looking for a silver lining (or a silver bullet) read the article from Katy Grimes at the end of this newsletter.

Last Week

Diablo Canyon Coastal Commission Hearing

The long-term fate of the Diablo Canyon Power Plant (DCPP) will be discussed at a California Coastal Commission (CCC) meeting on Thursday, November 6 in Sacramento. The main thrust of the discussion will be item 8; PG&E's Coastal Development Permit Application for continued operation of the facility beyond its current 2030 expiration.



Public comments are welcome and can be done in person or online. Registration to speak can be found at:

<https://www.coastal.ca.gov/meetings/agenda/#/2025/11>

Anyone wishing to speak is encouraged to register on or before Nov. 5.



C A L I F O R N I A
COASTAL
C O M M I S S I O N

According to its own website, the California Coastal Commission has 12 voting members and 3 non-voting members. Six of the voting members are "public members," and six are local elected officials who come from specific coastal districts. All voting members are appointed either by the Governor, Senate Rules Committee, or the Speaker of the Assembly; each appoints four commissioners, two public members and two elected officials. Each Commissioner may appoint an alternate to serve in his or her absence. The Secretaries of the Natural Resources Agency and the State Transportation Agency and the Chair of the State Lands Commission serve as non-voting members and may appoint a designee to serve in their place.

Many are frustrated that the CCC is so very powerful and sets so much policy with so little public input. This is your opportunity to provide input at an extremely critical moment.

As we all know, the Power Plant is the largest private employer in our county. PG&E is extremely involved in our community. The tax base is critical to our county budget and we need electricity. Even if all the projected wind and solar projects materialize, the reliability of Diablo power is essential to maintaining a strong grid. Wouldn't it be nice if we had excess power and were able to sell some of it to neighboring states?

Hip Hoppin Hypocrisy Happening

Get ready for the big show starring Supervisors Gibson and Paulding at the Tuesday, Nov 4 Board of Supervisors meeting. It's pretty likely that they will be shuckin' and jivin', dancing the hootchie cootchie, hemming and hawing and trying to make people believe that they support a high priority for housing ... just not this housing.

It's the final approval for the Dana Reserve planned community in Nipomo, with 1,242 homes, a south campus for Cuesta College and community wide infrastructure improvements.

Below is a chart illustrating each of the top priorities as defined by the majority of the members of the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors. The top tier should really be labeled as responsibilities, but the first tier below that is theoretically where the Board wants us to believe it will spend most of its discretionary efforts.



Ironically, not only does this project address housing, but it also addresses economic development through the creation of commercial space and the Cuesta College campus. It also addresses water resiliency. As stated in the Dana Reserve mission statement: “For the first time ever, more water will be returned into the Nipomo groundwater basin than extracted by the Nipomo Community Services District (NCSD) because of the return flows from the Dana Reserve.”

Gibson pretends that his problem with the project is that a settlement agreement was made in a lawsuit between the developer and two community groups - with the details being kept confidential. He makes a big fuss about a “secret agreement”, but in fact, he published the details of said secret in an op/ed piece in one of the local

newspapers. Even after disclosing the details that the parties had wished to keep to themselves, Gibson continues to insinuate that there is something nefarious going on and therefor the “public good” outweighs any possible need for homes. By the way, the agreements between the community groups seem pretty benign.

It is expected that Paulding will also try to dance around doing his best Kamala Harris style word salad while pretending to be a housing advocate. To date, he has not taken a formal position on the project but appears to want to be all things to all sides. As he often does, he could end up echoing Gibson.

Tossed into his word salad will be references to the need for low and very low-income housing, and at 206 units, this project is just too insufficient. Therefore, by his logic, it might be better that there are zero such housing than only 206 units. One wonders if he is removing any mention of housing from his campaign brochures.

There may be more feeble excuses thrown about, but the bottom line is that these two County Supervisors are posing when it comes to actually building the housing that they preach so much about.

Maybe the best that we can hope for are mercifully short speeches After all, there is nothing that can be said to cover up the hypocrisy that so many will witness on Tuesday.

Is Rent Control Coming?

As we reported earlier this year, there is activity in the City of San Luis Obispo that could lead to rent control. On Oct. 28, the City of San Luis Obispo held a workshop entitled **Know Your Rental Rights – Join the Upcoming Study Session.**

Discussion points for the study session were listed here:

- State and local renter protections, including habitability standards, eviction protections, and rent control under the California Tenant Protection Act.
- Potential new tools and incentives for renters and landlords, including:
- A **rental** registry to improve data collection and transparency
- Expanded just-cause eviction protections and notice requirements
- Landlord/tenant education, certification, and incentive programs

The rental registry reference indicates an interest in city access to data such as property type, size and facilities as well as rent amounts. With this data in hand, a rent control structure could be established.

Under the Who Should Attend column, the following was posted:

- Renters seeking to learn more about their rights and protections
- Landlords and property managers interested in learning more about landlord incentives, tenant protections and providing feedback on the impacts of existing and future renter protection policies
- Students and families affected by housing affordability
- Community organizations advocating for housing equity
- Residents who want to help shape local housing policy

With the prospect of “future renter protection policies” looming, we wonder how much interest might exist for a rent control measure. Sadly, when renter rights advocates begin stumping, they usually overlook the impact when renters abuse their rights, which can end up costing the system and thus leads to higher rent rates. It’s becoming less attractive to be a landlord and rent control just compounds that problem.

According to the City of San Luis Obispo: To receive updates from the City, please register for City News e-notifications on the City’s website at www.slocity.org/subscribe or follow the City of San Luis Obispo on social media.

A Pathway to Prudence?

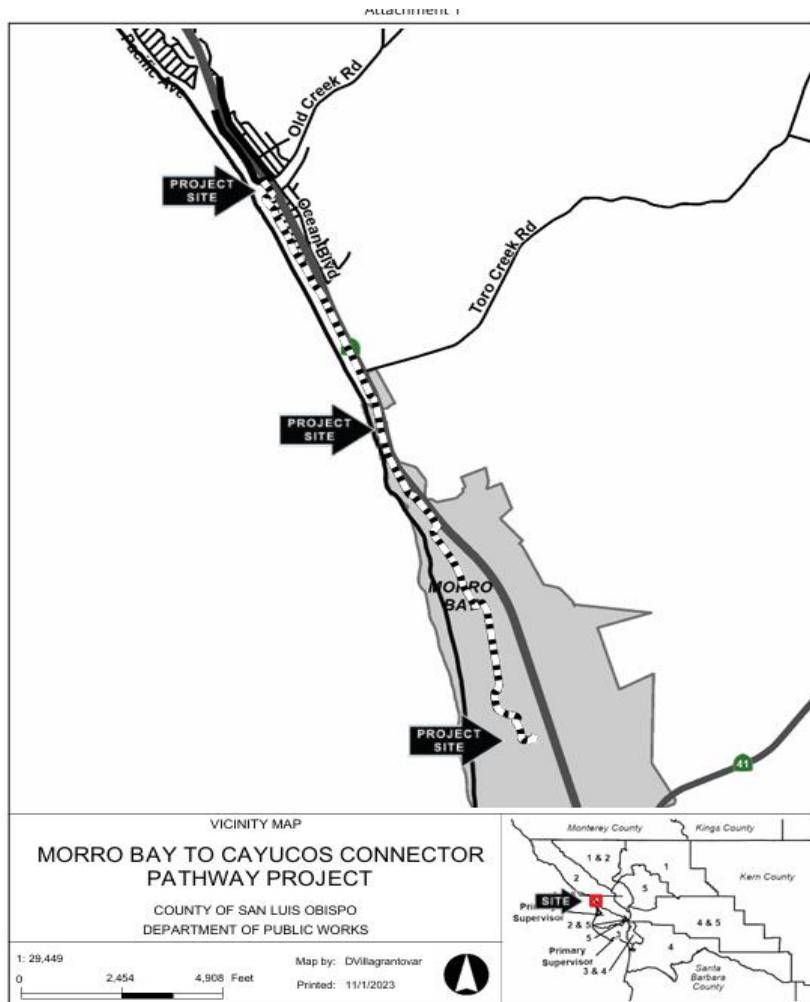
Item number 23 on the October 21 BoS agenda was one of those things that makes people wonder. It was:

Request to: 1) authorize a budget adjustment in the amount of \$200,000 to FC 230 – Capital Projects in the WBS 320054 – Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector Pathway Project (Project), located between the City of Morro Bay and the Community of Cayucos, using funds from the Parks Public Facilities Fees Designation in FC 247 - Public Facility Fees, by 4/5 vote; 2) approve and execute Contract Amendment No. 9 with Cannon Corporation, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000 for additional engineering design, environmental review, Caltrans coordination, environmental permitting, right-of-way, acquisition, and construction documents services for the Project; 3) authorize the Director of Public Works to approve amendments to the contract in an amount not to exceed a contingency of \$20,000; and 4) authorize advertisement for construction bids for the Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector Pathway Project (Project).

Here is a budget summary for the project:

WBS	Expenditures:	Approved Budget	Estimated Project Costs	Variance
320054	Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector Pathway	\$1,792,600	\$1,992,600	(\$200,000)
	Total Expenditures:	\$1,792,600	\$1,992,600	(\$200,000)
WBS	Funding Source:	Approved Funding	Proposed Funding	Variance
320054	Regional State Highway Account (RSHA)	\$1,192,600	\$1,192,600	\$0
320054	Parks Public Facility Fees (PFF)	\$600,000	\$800,000	(\$200,000)
	Total Funding:	\$1,792,600	\$1,992,600	(\$200,000)

Below is a map illustrating the location of the project. According to the scale on the illustration, the project is a little less than a mile and a half long giving it a cost of roughly \$1,330,000 per mile. Seems like a pretty swanky mile and a half:



A cost overrun is not surprising.

What some may find surprising, though, is that the county has a couple million to spend on a pathway.

Yes, it will be pleasant and quaint and much appreciated by some. However, when we are cutting services due to budget constraints, seeing less than anticipated revenues and worried about state and federal funding not materializing, spending nearly two million dollars on a path might strike some as imprudent.

It could get to the point where we spend so much on bike paths and hiking trails that someone will suggest that we need a special sales tax just to maintain the roads so that people can get to these beautiful pathways...

Bridging a Gap in Logic

Speaking of Public Works projects, a reader pointed out that our recent story about the Cecchetti “bridge” should have mentioned that the structure that washed out in the 2023 storms was not a bridge, but in fact a culvert. The reader further pointed out that replacing it with another culvert should be quick and relatively inexpensive.

All of those observations are spot on. The problem with that reasoning is that it is, well, reasonable. Unfortunately, California regulations are often unreasonable, which is the case in this instance. It seems that the creek is a habitat for creatures that the state demands be afforded easy passage under structures. Apparently, culverts aren’t good passageways for critters, so a bridge must be built.

What seems especially unreasonable is that rather than trying to come up with around \$800,000 for a temporary bridge, why can’t a replacement culvert be installed until the permanent bridge is constructed? This would be an interim of about two years and would simply replace what was there for many years - and would still be if the storms hadn’t hit.

Prop 50 - Don’t Forget to Cast Your Vote

Tell Gavin Newsom what you think of his scheme to “save democracy” by rigging the district lines for California Congressional seats.

Polls will be open until 8:00 PM on Tuesday, November 4. Theoretically, mailed ballots with a November 4 date stamp will be counted. If your only choice is to mail your ballot, then by all means get it sent in.

The better approach would be to take the ballot that was mailed to you to the polling place listed on that ballot mailer and cast it in person. Technically, you are allowed to take your ballot to any polling place, including the County Clerk office in the

County Administration building in downtown San Luis Obispo. While you are at it, offer to take your friends' and neighbors' completed ballots to the polling place. If they can't get there in person, you are allowed to deliver them.

If you are registered to vote, but have not received a ballot, please contact the San Luis Obispo Clerk/Recorder by clicking on this link: [Elections and Voting](#) or call (805) 781-5000. They can answer any questions you have, including where to find your polling place.



Emergent Trends
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**California's Tech Job Decline: Headed to
Progressive Ruin
As Gavin Newsom's Election Rigging
Measure Passes, Lawsuits Filed**

COLAB In Depth

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Who Has Been Busy Destroying Democracy?

SPONSORS



California's Tech Job Decline: Headed to Progressive Ruin

This is not a cyclical dip; it is falling apart, a structural unraveling, marked by net job losses, geographic dispersion, and missteps under Governor Gavin Newsom's watch

By Richie Greenberg, November 4, 2025

For decades, California has been globally synonymous with tech innovation, with San Francisco and Silicon Valley epicenter birthing giants like Apple, Google, Twitter/X and Meta. Yet, as of November 2025, dominance in the U.S. tech workforce is waning, with the share of national tech employment dipping below levels not seen since the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis.

This is not a cyclical dip; it is falling apart, a structural unraveling, marked by net job losses, geographic dispersion, and missteps under Governor Gavin Newsom's watch.

Compounded by Sacramento's deeply progressive legislature, surging urban decay—especially persistent open-air drug markets in San Francisco despite Mayor Daniel Lurie's efforts—and fiscal irresponsibility at both city and state levels, this decline in tech already threatens to relegate California from innovation vanguard to cautionary tale. The phenomenon signals a reconfiguration of America's tech landscape, where the state's high costs, regulatory rigidity, and politicized governance lost ground to more agile rivals like Texas and Florida.

The numbers paint a sobering picture. According to the [CompTIA State of the Tech Workforce 2025 report](#) California's share of total U.S. tech employment—encompassing software developers, IT specialists, and data scientists—has contracted to approximately 16% as of mid-2025, the lowest in over a decade and trailing the 16% range from 2008–2010. Back then, the state was clawing back from the dot-com bust's shadow amid the Great Recession. Fast-forward to today: U.S. tech employment peaked at around 6 million in 2023 but has since shed over 90,000 positions, per Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. California's pre-pandemic 19% share in 2019, has borne a disproportionate brunt. From a mid-2022's frenzy—when the state hit 531,000 tech sector jobs—it lost ~98,000 by early 2025, an 18% plunge returning totals to pre-COVID levels.

Figures underscore this reversal. Between early 2020 and mid-2022, California added 60,000 net tech jobs amid the remote-work boom. But from mid-2022 to mid-2025, job losses mounted to 71,000, with sub-sectors like web search portals (e.g., Google) and computer systems design leading the tech bleed, per [BLS revisions](#). In the Bay Area alone, tech employment contracted from 960,400 at its 2022 peak to 880,200 by late 2024, erasing pandemic gains. Statewide, 2025 has been brutal: over 118,000 U.S. tech layoffs, with more than half (~59,000) in California, hitting firms like Intel (5,000 cuts, mostly in the state), Meta, HP, and Salesforce. The Bay Area shed another 8,700 net tech jobs this past January–February 2025 alone.

This trend of job decline is no blip—it is a sustained contraction, accelerating despite an AI-fueled national rebound. CompTIA is projecting U.S. tech growth at 14% through 2032, adding ~1.1 million jobs overall, yet California's slice of that pie may shrink further to potentially 14% by decade's end.

Breakdowns reveal hotspots: San Francisco and San Jose have hemorrhaged since mid-2022, with losses easing but never halting. Revised data slashed prior growth estimates; what was once predicted as 814,000 net jobs added from 2022–2023 became 567,000, highlighting over-optimism in preliminary surveys. Nationally, tech postings fell 3% month-over-month in July 2025, but California's postings—once leading—now trails Texas and Virginia. The result? A “tech recession” that began in late 2022, with layoffs at Amazon, Google, and Meta, has instead coalesced into dispersion: Texas's share rose from 7% in 2010 to 10% today, siphoning jobs via lower costs and laxer rules.

Why California's tech freefall? A convergence of economic, social, and policy pressures.

First, the post-pandemic hangover: Pandemic hiring spree was unsustainable, with firms doubling employee head counts relying on remote work. AI exacerbated this: While Artificial Intelligence's generative tools promise efficiency, they have automated entry- and mid-level coding, slashing software engineer opportunities by 20% since October 2022, per [Stanford research](#).

California's revered AI hubs have not offset this loss; job postings for AI skills hit 125,000 nationally last May, 2025, but legacy roles like web dev and systems design—core to the state—cratered. AI is no savior for San Francisco's broader economic woes; it creates high-value roles at firms like OpenAI and Anthropic but entirely fails to stem our city's retail closures, office vacancies still at 35% in downtown SF, (In 2019, it was 4.7%), or the flight of mid-tier talent.

Geographic flight compounds the pain. Remote work enabled relocations, with 25% of departing tech workers fleeing to cheaper towns amid California's astronomical costs: San Francisco rents surged 50% since 2010, and median home prices top \$1.25 million. High state taxes—13.3% top income rate—drain high earners.

But the tech bro exodus is not just economic—it is cultural and political.

Governor Gavin Newsom's highly politicized rhetoric, framing California as a moral counterweight to “red states,” has alienated business leaders. His 2024 State of the State address boasted of the “strongest economy in America” while dismissing critics as “doom-loop” peddlers, even as sobering federal data showed a 156,300 net job loss in H1 2024. Newsom's administration has prioritized destructive progressive ideals over pragmatic governance, like championing

sweeping climate mandates and DEI requirements that burden startups. The state legislature, dominated by ultra-progressive Democrats, has doubled down—passing laws like AB 5, crippling gig economy flexibility.

San Francisco, the symbolic heart of tech, continues to be a flashpoint. Despite Mayor Daniel Lurie’s aggressive push since taking office in January 2025—attempting to deploy police sweeps, expanding treatment beds, and securing millions in state funds—the city’s open-air drug markets persist, particularly in the Tenderloin and SoMa districts. Fentanyl dealers operate in broad daylight, with overdose deaths spiking 41% from 2020 to 2023, per the [San Francisco Medical Examiner](#), and preliminary 2025 data showing slight decline. Property crime, retail theft and mentally ill individuals on the streets forced chains like Walgreens and Target to shutter stores. Tech workers, already remote-enabled, cite San Francisco’s safety as a top reason for leaving: a 2024 [Bay Area Council survey](#) found 62% of residents considering departure due to crime and homelessness.

Mayor Lurie’s efforts, while earnest, are undermined by prior decriminalization policies and a city budget bloated by fiscal irresponsibility—\$15 billion for FY 2025–26, with a projected \$1.1 billion deficit driven by pension obligations, union contracts, and unfunded homeless programs.

California’s tech decline—below 2008 levels, with 71,000+ jobs vaporized since 2022—points to a pivotal shift. Newsom’s petulant rhetoric clashes with on the ground realities, the state has tarnished its luster.

As Gavin Newsom’s Election Rigging Measure Passes, Lawsuits Filed

‘Cheer up: the worst is yet to come—for Democrats’

By [Katy Grimes](#), November 5, 2025

California Governor Gavin Newsom’s [Proposition 50](#), “the Election Rigging Response Act,” to influence the midterm elections, blow up California’s independent redistricting commission, and tamper with the [state’s electoral maps](#) mid-decade, was passed by voters.

The whole thing is a farce – a \$300 million farce. Proposition 50 was Newsom’s personal campaign for U.S. President. Newsom unconstitutionally overturned the voter-approved California Redistricting Commission with Prop. 50.

The Dhillon Law Group, Assemblyman David Tangipa, 18 California voters, and the California Republican Party announced they have filed a federal lawsuit challenging Prop. 50, alleging it unconstitutionally gerrymanders districts in violation of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments.

The Prop. 50 special election was held Tuesday November 4, 2025, and amazingly, the election was called before the polls closed – a miracle given that California has and uses 30 full days to count ballots, and during this time, many races are flipped.

“Prop 50 passes... Democrat voters are ok rigging elections to silence voters they don’t like,” Assemblyman Carl DeMaio (R-San Diego) said.

In August when the newly drawn electoral maps were leaked, Assembly Minority Leader James Gallagher (R-Gerber) said, “These are rigged maps drawn in secret to give Democrat politicians more power by dismantling the independent commission Californians created to keep them out of map-drawing.”

“These maps shred the fair, transparent process voters demanded,” Gallagher continued. “The independent commission spent months gathering public input, holding 196 public meetings, hearing 3,870 verbal comments and collecting 32,410 written submissions before finalizing the current maps. Democrat politicians are throwing that work in the trash for a rigged scheme cooked up behind closed doors.” We are about to see just how bad the maps are and how voiceless Republican voters will become.

After the ballots were mailed out to voters, it was evident that the ballots had a serious flaw: for those who vote NO, when the ballot is reinserted back in the mail-in envelope as instructed, the voter’s “NO” fill-in bubble shows through a hole in the signature block.

California gubernatorial candidate Steve Hilton called for the immediate suspension of the Proposition 50 special election after reports surfaced that voters’ marked choices are visible through the official return envelopes in multiple counties, calling it “a shocking breach of ballot secrecy, potentially affecting millions of Californians.” Hilton said this was “another example of the corruption and incompetence rigging California’s elections.”

“This is not a small mistake. It is an election integrity crisis,” Hilton continued. “When anyone can literally see through the envelope and tell how someone voted, that is not democracy. That is rigging the system in plain sight.”

Hilton was ignored.

While initial polls found that voters did not support mid-decade redistricting, Newsom and Democrats pivoted their messaging and made it a referendum on President Donald Trump. They claimed Trump was attempting to rig the midterm elections with redistricting – a bold lie.

Spending on the YES campaign came from billionaire Democrat mega-donors: George Soros who dumped \$10 million and Tom Steyer who contributed \$12.8 million.

California Democratic Socialists of America contributed in the “struggle against fascism.”

“Cheer up: the worst is yet to come—for Democrats,” Steve Hayward said on his [substack](#). “Welp, yesterday’s election results are another validation of H.L. Mencken’s famous line, ‘Democracy is the theory that the common people know what they want, and deserve to get it good and hard.’ Only question now is: how hard?”

He continues: “Republicans should be discouraged today. However, keep in mind that turnout in off-year elections almost always favors the party out of power in Washington. Republicans haven’t won the governorship of Virginia when they held the White House since 1969. Then, too, let’s keep in mind that as the Big Sort continues—that is, Republicans leaving blue states for red states in large numbers—it becomes progressively harder for Republicans to win in blue states even in good years. We saw this with Lee Zeldin in New York in 2022.”

“If Republicans hadn’t moved out of blue states in such a high numbers, these elections would be closer—and perhaps come out differently in a few cases.”

A blue wave in blue states – no big surprise. The same goes for California. Conservatives, Republicans, moderates and middle class are leaving the state in droves. What’s left is the Democrat voters knowing what they want, and they are about to get it good and hard.

In addition to the Dhillon Law filing suit today, Attorney Jim Lacy reports that today, “a citizens’ initiative will be filed with the California Attorney General to reinstate the California Citizens Redistricting Commission’s Congressional Districts in 2028. The ‘Fair, Independent, and Nonpartisan Redistricting Act’ (FAIR) will appear on the November 2026 ballot if enough signatures are gathered.”

NRCC Chairman Richard Hudson (R-NC) released the following statement after the passage of Prop 50:

“No matter how Democrats redraw the lines to satisfy Gavin Newsom’s power grab, they can’t redraw their record of failure, and that’s why they will fail to take the House majority. Even under this new map, Republicans have clear opportunities to flip seats because Californians are fed up with Democrat chaos. We will continue to compete and win because our candidates are stronger, our message is resonating, and Californians are tired of being ignored.”

Stay tuned.

Who Has Been Busy Destroying Democracy?

15 Comments / August 14, 2025

Victor Davis Hanson

American Greatness

“Destroying democracy”—the latest theme of the left—can be defined in many different ways.

How about attempting to destroy constitutional, ancient, and hallowed institutions simply to suit short-term political gains?

So, who in 2020, and now once again, has boasted about packing the 156-year-old, nine-justice Supreme Court?

Who talks frequently about destroying the 187-year-old Senate filibuster—though only when they hold a Senate majority?

Who wants to bring in an insolvent left-wing Puerto Rico and redefine the 235-year-old District of Columbia—by altering the Constitution—as two new states solely to obtain four additional liberal senators?

Who is trying to destroy the constitutionally mandated 235-year Electoral College by circumventing it with the surrogate “The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact?”

Does destroying democracy also entail weaponizing federal bureaucracies, turning them into rogue partisan arms of a president?

So who ordered the CIA to concoct bogus charges of “collusion” to sabotage Trump’s 2016 campaign, the 2016-2017 transition, and the first 22 months of Trump’s first term?

Who prompted a cabal of “51 former intelligence officials” to lie to the American people on the eve of the last debate of the 2020 election that the FBI-authenticated Hunter Biden laptop was instead the work of a “Russian intelligence operation?”

Who ordered the FBI to connive and partner with social media conglomerates to censor accurate news deemed unhelpful to the 2020 Biden campaign?

Who pulled off the greatest presidential coup in history by using surrogates in the shadows to run the cognitively debilitated Biden presidency, then by fiat canceled his reelection effort, and finally anointed as his replacement the new nominee Kamala Harris, who had never won a single primary delegate?

Who ordered FBI SWAT teams to invade the home of a former president because of a classification dispute over 102 files out of some 13,000 stored there?

Who tried to remove an ex-president and leader of his party from at least 25 state ballots to deprive millions of Americans of the opportunity to vote for or against him?

Who coordinated four local, state, and federal prosecutors to destroy a former and future president by charging him with fantasy crimes that were never before, and will never again be, lodged against anyone else?

Who appointed a federal prosecutor to go after the ex-president, who arranged for a high-ranking Justice Department official to step down to join a New York prosecutor's efforts to destroy an ex-president, and who met in the White House with a Georgia county prosecutor seeking to destroy an ex-president—all on the same day—a mere 72 hours after Trump announced his 2024 reelection bid?

Who but the current Democrats ever impeached a president twice?

Has any party ever tried an ex-president in the Senate when he was out of office and a mere private citizen?

When have there ever been two near-miss assassination attempts on a major party presidential candidate during a single presidential campaign?

Who destroyed the southern border and broke federal law to allow in, without criminal or health background audits, some 10–12 million illegal aliens?

Who created 600 “sanctuary jurisdictions” for the sole purpose of nullifying federal immigration law, in the eerie spirit of the renegade old Confederacy?

Who allowed tens of thousands of rioters, arsonists, and violent protestors over four months in 2020 to destroy over \$2 billion in property, kill some 35 people, injure 1,500 police officers, and torch a federal courthouse, a police precinct, and a historic church—all with de facto legal impunity?

How do the purported destroyers of democracy find themselves winning 60–70 percent approval on most of the key issues of our times, while the supposed saviors of democracy are on the losing side of popular opinion?

How does a president “destroy democracy” by his party winning the White House by both the popular and Electoral College vote, winning majorities in both the

Senate and House by popular votes, and enjoying a 6–3 edge in the Supreme Court through judges appointed by popularly elected presidents?

So what is behind these absurd charges?

Three catalysts: one, the new anguished elitist Democrat Party alienated the middle classes through its Jacobin agenda and therefore lost the Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court, and now has no federal political power.

Two, the Democrat Party is polling at record lows and yet remains hellbent on alienating the traditional sources of its power—minorities, youth, and Independents.

Three, Democrats cannot find any issues that the people support, nor any leaders to convince the people to embrace them.

So it is no surprise that the panicked Democrats bark at the shadows—given that they know their revolutionary, neo-socialist agenda is destroying them. And yet, like all addicts, they choose destruction over abandoning their self-destructive fixations.

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**Representative Salud Carbajal
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