



Local News RoundUp

October 15, 2013

REDEVELOPMENT

[California Controller Chiang Rebuffs Cerritos Mayor Barrows Statement on Redevelopment Payment Ruling \(*Los Cerritos News*\)](#)

California Controller John Chiang told Hews Media Group-Community Newspaper in a statement on Monday that Cerritos city officials must comply with a ruling that demands that more than \$170,000,000 in municipal assets be transferred to state coffers as a result of the elimination of redevelopment agencies in the state more than two years ago.

The Controller's asset review report can be found [online](#).

PUBLIC SAFETY

[U.S. Supreme Court Refuses to Hear Brown's Prisons Appeal \(*Los Angeles Times*\)](#)

The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear Gov. Jerry Brown's second appeal of court-ordered prison crowding caps in California.

The high court released its decision early Tuesday morning in a single sentence: "The appeal is dismissed for want of jurisdiction."

LEGISLATION

[Charter Cities to Lose Authority Over Public Works Projects \(*Public CEO*\)](#)

Last night Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 7 into law, effectively stripping charter cities of local control. The law explicitly targets cities that have voter-approved provisions in their charters that authorize the optional use of prevailing wage.

[Jerry Brown's Approval of New Hiring Law Prompts State Action \(*Sacramento Bee*\)](#)

A new law that delays when California state and local public employers can ask job applicants about their criminal histories reflects existing state policy, but it still has state officials thinking about the measure's implications.

[Jerry Brown Finishes Bills for the Year, Signing Nearly 9 in 10 \(*Sacramento Bee*\)](#)

Gov. Jerry Brown was reviewing bills in the courtyard outside his Capitol office one day this month when, during a break, he lamented the time required by "these damn bills" and suggested his inclination to sign many more of them was waning.

[Prevailing Wage Law Could Raise Costs \(*San Diego Union Tribune*\)](#)

Some charter cities in San Diego County and across California will have to either pay generally higher wages for public works projects or forego state grants that help cover construction costs for everything from new roads to water mains.

[Modesto Fears Harm from New Prevailing Wage Law \(Modesto Bee\)](#)

Modesto is worried that a new state law on what is called the prevailing wage will harm its ability to keep its parks and golf courses clean and green and its city buildings neat and tidy.

Gov. Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 7 into law over the weekend. The law requires charter cities – such as Modesto – to pay the prevailing wage on construction and maintenance projects to receive state funding.

[Brown Vetoes Atkins Housing Bill; Signs Crime Measures \(San Diego Union Tribune\)](#)

Saying it will not work, Gov. Jerry Brown has vetoed legislation that sought to clarify state law so that cities and counties could require developers to offer affordable housing units as a condition of their building permit.

The veto drew a sharp rebuke from Assemblywoman Toni Atkins, D-San Diego, who carried the bill.

[More on SB 7: Gov. Brown Signs Bill to Neuter Charter Cities \(PublicCEO\)](#)

Despite the California Constitution section which guarantees California's 121 charter cities the authority over their municipal business, Gov. Jerry Brown signed SB 7, which will deprive these cities of state funding and financial assistance for projects if they do not pay the prevailing wage. The bill was a classic special interest sponsored bill, sponsored by the State Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO.

[Dan Walters: California Construction Unions get Two Big Wins \(Sacramento Bee\)](#)

Brown signed a bill (Senate Bill 7) that circumvents a state Supreme Court decision and punishes cities with independent governing charters that exempt themselves from prevailing wage laws by denying them state public works funds.

[SB 7 Constraint Reminds Us of Feds' Intrusion \(The Bakersfield Californian\)](#)

Gov. Jerry Brown's signature on Senate Bill 7, requiring charter cities to pay the local prevailing wage on most public works projects, will cost Bakersfield somewhere between \$600,000 and \$1,000,000 a year when it takes effect in 2015, according to City Manager Alan Tandy.

[Governor's Veto Frustrates Santa Monica's Affordable Housing Advocates \(Santa Monica Lookout\)](#)

Governor Jerry Brown vetoed legislation Monday that Santa Monica's affordable housing advocates had hoped would help increase the number of low-rent units in the increasingly costly bayside city.

The inclusionary housing bill -- as AB 1229 was known -- was an effort by State legislators to assure that cities had the right to require developers to build low-income housing as part of their zoning codes, a practice currently prohibited by State legislation designed to give property owners relief from stringent rent control laws.

PENSIONS / EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

[Statewide Pension Fight Brewing for 2014 or 2016: Opinion \(San Gabriel Valley Tribune\)](#)

This is the week that San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed said he plans to file the paperwork to kick off a statewide initiative to bring municipal pensions back into control. The Democrat in a talk at the conservative Hoover Institute at Stanford last week that he would be filing for a constitutional amendment in "a couple of days" that would give cities the ability to scale down the pension benefits of existing employees.

[Reed Files Public Pension Ballot Proposal with California AG \(Sacramento Bee\)](#)

San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed filed papers Tuesday in the first step toward qualifying a public pension measure for a statewide vote in California, a move that drew instant criticism from public employee unions.

[Corona: Employees Could Pay More to Pension Costs \(*The Press-Enterprise*\)](#)

Corona city employees would pay a greater share of their retirement costs under agreements set to take effect in November.

[Lodi Town Hall Meeting Focuses on Pensions \(*Lodi News-Sentinel*\)](#)

Audience members and city officials were split as to whether they heard the answers they wanted at Monday's town hall meeting with Lodi's state lawmakers, especially when it came to the city's pension obligations.

Some felt State Sen. Cathleen Galgiani, D-Stockton, and Assemblyman Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, offered a fresh perspective on reforms made by the state in 2012 and the pension problem faced by the city — which is expected to pay \$16.9 million to fund its employee retirement benefits in 2020.

[Long Beach Reaches Pension Reform Deals with Remaining Unions \(*Long Beach Press Telegram*\)](#)

The city has reached pension reform agreements with four employee unions, capping a long process of negotiations that sets the stage for a healthier financial future, leaders said Monday.

REPORTS & STUDIES

[Little Hoover Commission Report: A New Plan for a New Economy: Reimagining High Education](#)

In a study released today, "A New Plan for a New Economy: Reimagining Higher Education," the Little Hoover Commission calls for a new master plan for higher education that addresses both the state's need to substantially increase the number of graduates and the reality that state resources are limited.

HOUSING

[East Palo Alto Faces Pressure to Crack Down on Questionable Housing Add-Ons \(*Peninsula Press*\)](#)

The Bay Area real estate boom that triggered new demand for housing in East Palo Alto has also escalated community tension over garage conversions, backyard dwellings and home add-ons.

An increase in complaints over parking, noise and other issues tied to these "secondary dwelling units" — sometimes the only option for low-income residents — has prompted the City Council to take notice. The council held a special study session last week and will consider possible solutions within four to six months.

FEDERAL SHUTDOWN

[Prolonged Shutdown Could Hurt Housing Market Recovery \(*San Jose Mercury News*\)](#)

Until legislation providing for funding is signed into law, many federal government offices will remain closed, and many government programs, including some that affect federal housing and mortgage programs, will be suspended or slowed due to the lapse in government funding. Realtors say if the government shutdown is prolonged, it could hurt the housing market recovery.

CITY ORDINANCES

[Bag Ban Getting Regional Look \(*My Desert*\)](#)

A regional approach to plastic shopping bags could bring about a quicker end to the convenient but

environmentally costly sacks.

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments is moving forward with plans to develop a model ordinance banning single-use plastic bags that it would encourage area cities to adopt. A CVAG committee made up of desert city managers voted to support the effort Monday.

EMERGING ISSUES

[Scrap Metal Thieves Grab Fire Hydrants in Irvine \(Associated Press\)](#)

Scrap metal thieves have grabbed a pair of fire hydrants from the streets of Irvine.

Though it's still a rare crime in the Orange County city, it's the second time in three weeks that hydrants were unbolted.

WATER

[Southern California Water Agencies Push Delta Tunnels \(My Desert\)](#)

Southern California water agencies are joining the state government in promoting a plan to build massive tunnels beneath the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta to carry water southward to farms and cities.

[State Officials Share Water Shortage Concerns \(Agoura Hills Patch\)](#)

The reliability of the State Water Project, California's water reserves, is being threatened by declining environmental conditions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, officials said. Even though the previous water year, which began Oct. 1, 2012, started wet, state regulation to protect the delta smelt—the little fish are protected by the Endangered Species Act—prevented the SWP from taking its share of water during that period.

IN OTHER CITY NEWS

[IBM's Smart Cities Program Learns as it Goes \(The Washington Post\)](#)

In Miami-Dade County, a network of sensors and scanners is quietly collecting data about the area's population and relaying the information to local government.

Meters embedded in public pipes rapidly gather data about water usage, sometimes identifying leaks before they spread. Analytical software combs through records using algorithms to identify high-probability suspects for particular crimes. The county is piloting security cameras capable of recognizing faces, intended to alert police if sex offenders appear in public parks.

[Virtual Town Halls? San Mateo County Makes it a Reality \(California Forward\)](#)

California is a global leader in innovation. The Golden State is home to creative entrepreneurs, world-class companies, leading universities and premier research institutions. It's only natural that cities and counties, up and down the state, embrace technology to engage and communicate with their citizens. Such is the case in San Mateo County with its new website, [San Mateo Speak Out](#).