McEachron hire on ambitious transportation project met with caution

By Shea Johnson
Staff Writer
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He will be paid a nearly $100,000 annual salary for, on average, 20.5 hours of work per week — terms that officials said were earmarked for the role in the 2008 joint powers budget.

The conditional hire of a former Victorville City Councilman to serve as a part-time special projects coordinator on an ambitious transportation project has stirred a range of reactions, from endorsement to caution to outright protest.

“I’m averse to anything that would bring controversy,” said Josie Gonzales, San Bernardino County 5th District supervisor, before declaring she would ultimately back the hire of Ryan McEachron.

“But I will also be the first to say that if things go awry, if things go sideways, if I see that there is any cronyism or self-interests or tit-for-tat, you know, some back-slapping going on,” she qualified, “I will be the first to call him out and say he’s got to go, because it is important that we continue to be transparent and also that we be progressive in that direction.”

McEachron, who served on the Victorville City Council from 2008 to 2016, was appointed Tuesday to an inter-governmental relations advocacy role for the High Desert Corridor, a proposed multi-modal link connecting the Victor and Antelope valleys.

The hire is contingent on the majority approval of the eight-member joint powers authority.

He will be paid a nearly $100,000 annual salary for, on average, 20.5 hours of work per week — terms that officials said were earmarked for the role in the 2008 joint powers budget.

Because the gig will end when the fiscal year does, in about eight months, he’ll actually see a little more than $68,000, according to county documents. The county’s share of his compensation is roughly $23,875, while the corridor JPA will pick up the remaining cost.

“He has a breadth of knowledge that I think will complement this position,” said Josh Candelaria, the county’s director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs, in describing the choice to pick McEachron.
The insurance business owner and former Congressional hopeful served as Victorville's representative to the corridor JPA throughout both his council terms.

He was also a delegate to Southern California Association of Governments and had been president of the then-called San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), currently known as the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority.

Candelaria acknowledged only three candidates were internally vetted for the position, noting how the contract length, combined with the required skill set, had narrowed their options.

“So you can imagine, I think with that as the particular framework,” he explained, “it’s a little bit difficult to find a candidate with the expertise.”

But the conditional hire has set off at least a mild controversy, drawing sharp criticism from opponents over the county’s failure to formally recruit for the unclassified position, which opened up three months ago following a retirement, and for the close connection between McEachron and county Supervisors Chairman Robert Lovingood.

Lovingood abstained from Tuesday’s unanimous vote, citing “an abundance of cautiousness,” and declined to comment for this story, deferring instead to Candelaria’s comments.

The ties between Lovingood and McEachron, a focal point for critics, are well known.

McEachron donated $4,650 to Lovingood’s re-election campaign last year. His insurance company, ISU Insurance Services — ARMAC Agency, counts as a client the staffing agency owned by Lovingood and his wife.

And the two were also top administrators together on SANBAG.

“I know Robert Lovingood has a special friendship with Mr. McEachron,” said Victorville Councilwoman Blanca Gomez, a surprise show-up to board chambers, “and the vote of politicians here would make it seem they were favoring Mr. McEachron.”

Gomez was the highest-profiled of several public commenters during the board meeting to lambast the conditional hire.

Candelaria, when prompted, insisted any potential conflicts of interest had already been addressed.

“We had a long conversation,” he said. “Those are issues that we specifically spoke at lengths to.”

In a phone conversation with the Daily Press on Thursday, McEachron expressed a similar sentiment, dismissing the resistance to his appointment, the level of which had caught him somewhat off-guard, as “clearly politically driven.”
In addition to stepping down as an alternate member to the Local Agency Formation Commission, he said he would also quit the consulting firm he had begun with former Hesperia Mayor Eric Schmidt.

The firm mostly dealt with shepherding clients through development and entitlement processes.

As for his initial interest to be the special projects coordinator, a role which will include coordinating with other agencies and identifying funding opportunities for the corridor, McEachron said it was two-fold.

He had been aware of his predecessor’s pending retirement during his time on the JPA and he later met with Candelaria on a couple of occasions.

“Obviously, there are some folks that don’t want to see me continue to be involved, which is sad,” he said, suggesting his track record has proven he can adeptly juggle running a business while working with a government agency. “I believe I bring value to this process, which is one of the reasons I was chosen.”

Days before his conditional appointment, however, the blogosphere and social media were publicizing it, which likely contributed to the board meeting’s cautious tenor.

Joseph Turner, executive director of anti-illegal immigration nonprofit, American Children First, chastised McEachron in a news release sent to regional reporters Sunday as a “wannabe career politician addicted to eating out of the government trough.”

Turner also drew parallels between McEachron’s conditional hire and Fred Aguiar who, while serving as Lovingood’s chief policy advisor, was contractually stipulated to work 18.5 hours per week for an annual salary of $122,700.

Lovingood staunchly defended the hire at the time, pointing to Aguiar’s value as documented and worth it.

Shea Johnson can be reached at 760-955-5368 or SJohnson@VVDailyPress.com. Follow him on Twitter at @DP_Shea.
Betty Lozano, 34, of Adelanto (pictured), died July 26 after being booked at the High Desert Detention Center on suspicion of being under the influence of drugs. Her family claims she was denied emergency medical care.

The family of an Adelanto woman who died after being booked into the High Desert Detention Center in July has filed four claims against the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department, alleging negligence and denial of medical care.
Betty Lozano, 34, was arrested about 4:27 p.m. July 26 on suspicion of being under the influence of drugs. She began to suffer a medical emergency while in the back of the patrol car or upon arrival at the jail and was in a semi-conscious state.

According to the claims, she was wheeled into the jail in a wheelchair, nude from the waist down, her feet dragging on the ground because the wheelchair had no footplates.

The claims also contend that Lozano was provided little to no medical care and was not immediately screened by a nurse to evaluate her overall physical fitness for incarceration.

The claims allege Lozano was “dumped from her wheelchair” in a “sobering cell” and was left there for hours.

They were filed by Victorville attorneys Sharon Brunner and Jim Terrell on behalf of Lozano’s mother, Maria Stoflet, sister Christina Montes, and uncle Juan Lozano, who is now the legal guardian of Betty Lozano’s two children, Brunner said.

“They have told us there is a serious problem with the medical care going on at West Valley (Detention Center) and (High Desert Detention Center),” Brunner said in a telephone interview Thursday.

As a matter of protocol, arrestees appearing in need of medical attention are evaluated by a nurse prior to booking, Ohannessian said, adding that the intake nurse may direct the arresting officer or deputy to contact a hospital if the nurse feels an arrestee needs to be checked out by a doctor.

Whether that occurred in Lozano’s case is under investigation.

“The thorough investigation will be looking at every step in the process in Lozano’s case,” Ohannessian said.

Lozano’s sister, Christina Montes, said in a telephone interview Thursday that she resorted to legal action because she has not been able to get any answers as to what happened to her sister since her death.

“It’s been so hard to get any information to even find out what happened to my sister. Everyone’s given us the runaround. Nobody knows what’s going on,” said Montes, 33, of Taylorsville, Utah. “I couldn’t just let this happen, and I needed to find out what happened to my sister.”

She said her sister, who is survived by a 5-year-old and 1-year-old daughter, suffered from bipolar disorder and had struggled with drugs.

“They acted like it didn’t matter. My sister did matter,” Montes said.
Trudy Raymundo
Director of Public Health
San Bernardino County, California

What's your big project in open data/open government right now?

San Bernardino County's Department of Public Health is currently working on two open performance initiatives. The first — Community Vital Signs — is connected with our current multi-sectoral efforts around community health assessment and improvement. The ultimate goal behind the Community Vital Signs Open Performance site was to provide a platform whereby the community could see the progress we were making in improving the health and wellness of our county and its residents. The site goes beyond simple health metrics, but looks at environmental and upstream determinants — including education, crime, housing, employment and the built environment — that can affect a community's health. It also shares stories behind the data, as well as local strategies and policy recommendations to address certain issues. Finally, it is intended to act as a central point, whereby the community can have access to strategic data that can help them continue the conversation into their own neighborhoods.

The second is an Open Performance Dashboard specifically for the department. The goal for the departmental site is much the same as above, but addresses our own accountability to the community for certain activities, goals and objectives we drive as a department.

How is this work changing how government does business?

Our initial work with open performance helped to drive conversation and collaboration around complex issues. It provided the data that led to conversation with other sectors that may not have understood their role in creating a healthy community. The work has also created a deeper understanding of how each of the sectors are not only interrelated, but interdependent. It was a way to illustrate the effects of education on an individual's health, the effects of housing stability, the effects of crime, the effects of a retail food environment and lack of built environment, etc. on the health of the community and its residents.

It has also increased our focus on accountability, transparency, and performance. It is allowing us to move towards outcomes rather than outputs.

It has been said that data which is tracked, improves. Though this has proven not to be the case in every situation, the tenets behind open performance makes each partner accountable towards efforts to improve.

What's one change you would like to see in the government and/or open data space?

I'd love to see improved consolidation and coordination between platforms and capabilities. I would also like to see open data begin moving towards “intentionality” — how can I use this data more meaningfully, whether it's to better understand complex issues, use the data for decision making, gain a better understanding of unique communities or populations?
Ultimately, there should be greater conversation across all sectors regarding the value of shared data. Real discussions should occur about current and perceived obstacles, but more importantly, innovative solutions to address these obstacles. For too long, data has been seen as a commodity to control, but rather it should be seen as an asset to be shared.
Residents rate SB County as a very good place to live according to annual public opinion survey by CSUSB Institute

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. – San Bernardino County is a “very good” place to live, according to residents who think the county’s economy is excellent and have a “great deal” of trust in their elected officials. But crime continues to be a worry.

Those were some of the findings in the 2017 Inland Empire Annual Survey, a telephone survey of 1,222 residents randomly selected within San Bernardino County and conducted by the Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis at Cal State San Bernardino.

The institute analyzes public opinion in San Bernardino County relative to the economy, crime, ratings of the county as a place to live, private and public services, commuting, and confidence in
elected officials, said institute director Barbara Sirotnik, a professor of statistics and supply chain management at Cal State San Bernardino.

This year the survey, which is available as an online PDF on the institute's website, was supported by CSUSB as a platinum sponsor; the Mojave Water Agency and the city of Rancho Cucamonga as silver sponsors; and Omnitrans, city of San Bernardino, and San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools as bronze sponsors. All the sponsors gain valuable information from the collected data.

The following are highlights of the survey as they relate to various community issues:

**ECONOMIC EVALUATIONS:**

The number of residents who rated the county's economy as “excellent” or “good” continued to improve, but hasn't yet reached pre-recession levels. There continues to be an improvement in the number of respondents reporting that they are better off financially than they were a year ago. More young people feel financially better off than older people, and express more optimism about the future. Renters are more optimistic than homeowners are about the future. Hispanics have a higher likelihood than non-Hispanics to think they will be “better off” financially in the coming year.

**CRIME … REALITY AND PERCEPTIONS:**

Crime is on the upswing in the county, but fear of crime showed a slight decrease. Fear is highest in Apple Valley, Hesperia, San Bernardino and Yucaipa. Young people are more fearful than older people, females are more fearful than males, Hispanics are more fearful than non-Hispanics, and people with lower incomes and education are slightly more fearful than those with high or middle incomes.

**OVERALL RATINGS OF THE COUNTY AS A PLACE TO LIVE:**

Seven out of 10 residents rated San Bernardino County as a “very good” or “fairly good” place to live. Democrats gave higher ratings of the county than Republicans or Independents, and ratings differed significantly by city of residence. Residents continued to cite “good area/location/scenery” as the most positive aspect of living in the county, and “crime/gang activity/drugs” as the most negative. Air quality has virtually dropped off the charts as a major negative of life in the county.

**EVALUATIONS OF SELECTED PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SERVICES:**

Libraries were rated the highest among all evaluated services, followed by ratings of police/sheriff, shopping, and parks and recreation. Street/road maintenance was rated lowest of the list of services, as has been the case in the past.

**COMMUTING:**
Since 1997, a majority of respondents have reported that their commute time is less than one hour. The percent with those “short” commutes is virtually the same as last year. Median commute time decreased from last year’s high. San Bernardino County residents’ commutes take a huge financial and non-monetary toll. Most respondents report that they work in San Bernardino County, with Los Angeles County being the next most common destination.

CONFIDENCE IN ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Confidence in elected officials has barely budged for the last few years. A majority of respondents report having a “great deal” or “some” confidence in their local elected officials, but San Bernardino County figures remain below national figures from the Gallup organization.

To download the PDF format of the 2017 Inland Empire Annual Survey, visit http://iar.csusb.edu/reports/documents/AnnualReportSept15.pdf or see more reports here, http://iar.csusb.edu/reports/ie_annual_survey.html. To speak to the primary author of the report, Professor Barbara Sirotnik, call (909) 537-5729.

The Institute of Applied Research and Policy Analysis at California State University, San Bernardino, is a full-service consulting and applied research organization. The purpose of the institute is to provide a variety of research and consulting services to public agencies, business organizations, and individuals within the university’s service area.

About Cal State San Bernardino

California State University, San Bernardino is a preeminent center of intellectual and cultural activity in Inland Southern California. Opened in 1965 and set at the foothills of the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains, the university serves more than 20,000 students each year and graduates about 4,000 students annually. CSUSB reflects the dynamic diversity of the region and has the most diverse student population of any university in the Inland Empire. More than 80 percent of those who graduate are the first in their families to do so.

For more information on Cal State San Bernardino, contact the university’s Office of Strategic Communication at (909) 537-5007 and visit http://news.csusb.edu.

SAN BERNARDINOINO NEWS

Public Hearing to be Held for Innovative Behavioral Health Pilot Project

September 28, 2017
LOCAL NEWS

Hear photojournalist’s perspective on covering San Bernardino terrorist attack

By CONTRIBUTED CONTENT | PUBLISHED: September 28, 2017 at 1:44 pm | UPDATED: September 28, 2017 at 11:59 pm

Rick Sforza, a photo editor for the Southern California News Group, will present “When Terror Came to San Bernardino: A Tragedy Captured in Photographs” when Redlands Camera Club meets 7 p.m. Oct. 2 at Redlands First Presbyterian Church, 100 Cajon St.

On Dec. 2, 2015, when terrorists killed 14 people and injured 22 others in a mass shooting at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, Sforza directed team coverage of the attack and took many photos himself in the weeks that followed.

Sforza will share photos that appeared in the Redlands Daily Facts, San Bernardino Sun and other local newspapers and will provide a photojournalist’s perspective on covering the attack and its aftermath. He will also discuss some of the challenges of photographing world-shaking events when the photographers are personally touched by the tragedy.

The Southern California News Group's breaking coverage of the attack was nominated for the Pulitzer prize in journalism.

The program is free and open to the public.

The Redlands Camera Club meets 7 to 9 p.m. the first and third Monday of every month. For information about the club and its programs, go to www.redlandscameraclub.com.

Source: Redlands Camera Club

Tags:  Echo Code

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A Work of Art, a Luxury Vehicle or Both? Discover the Philosophy Behind Mazda

By Mazda

Stylish, luxurious and created with world-class Japanese craftsmanship,

Contributed Content

Mazda’s CX-5 strikes a formidable pose.
Fontana, Calif. – Fontana Mayor Acquanetta Warren is among 25 women elected leaders selected to participate in the Governing Institute’s Women in Government Leadership Class of 2018. The Mayor will be the only elected representative from the State of California participating in the year-long program designed to promote and support elected women leaders from across the nation. Each class is chosen from nominations submitted online at www.governing.com/wig.

“I consider this a huge honor for our entire city,” states Mayor Acquanetta Warren upon receiving notification. “The opportunity to be among 25 women leaders from across the United States and the only one from California says so much about our great City of Fontana.”

Mayor Warren remains focused on seeking opportunities to ensure Fontana has a voice on county, state and national issues. Her participation in the program will allow her to collaborate with elected leaders across the nation.
According to the announcement on September 19, 2017 from the Governing Institute, “The women in the Class of 2018 are subject matter experts, negotiators, civic activists and pioneers,” says Julia Burrows, director of the Governing Institute. “Each year, the program adds to a national network, with 25 new members who establish deep friendships, provide consultation and campaign support and recruit future female candidates. The common goals of gender parity and advancing good government forge a bond that rises above partisanship and will pay dividends for many generations.” View the Governing Institute press release for more program details and a complete list of the elected officials participating.

The 25 women in the program’s new class will be profiled in the February 2018 issue of Governing magazine and will participate in Governing events throughout the coming year. The Class of 2018 will gather for their first leadership conference November 4-5 in Phoenix, Arizona.

The Governing Institute funds participation in The Women in Government Leadership Class completely

**FONTANA NEWS**

- **Fontana Mayor Selected for 2018 Women in Government Leadership Class**
  - September 29, 2017

- **Why You Should Participate in Manufacturing Day at the InTech Center**
  - September 19, 2017

- **Get to Steppin’ Fontana: Community Walk**
  - September 15, 2017
Fontana to receive $1.9 million grant for sidewalk improvements

Fontana will receive a $1.9 million dollar grant for the Safe Routes to School project as part of California's 2017 Active Transportation Program.

The project will improve pathways for over 5,000 students to walk or bike to eight schools located on busy streets. Construction is expected to start in 2019.

The project includes constructing new American with Disability Act (ADA) compliant sidewalks on four segments of city streets, curb and gutter ramps, ADA curb ramps, street striping and traffic signs, where needed.

In addition, more than 25,000 residents living within a half mile of the project sites will benefit from the improvements at the following locations in Fontana:
Fontana to receive $1.9 million grant for sidewalk improvements – San Bernardino Sun

“Ramona Avenue (between Juniper Avenue and Sierra Avenue)
• Alder Avenue (between Baseline Avenue and Shamrock Avenue)
• Two segments on Locust Avenue (from Miller Avenue to Arrow Boulevard)

“Our goal continues to be to provide better mobility for everyone in Fontana,” said Fontana Director of Engineering Ricardo Sandoval.

“This grant funding will improve the city’s existing sidewalk infrastructure in several highly traveled areas and also promote a more walkable and bikeable community.”

The project will benefit children attending six elementary schools, one middle school and one high school located within a one-mile radius of the proposed project sites. The schools include:

• Mango Elementary
• Juniper Elementary
• North Tamarind
• Locust Elementary
• Virginia Primrose
• Ted J. Porter
• Alder Middle School
• Eric Birch High School

Tags: Inland Empire, Top Stories IVDB, Top Stories PE, Top Stories Sun

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When Japanese Passion and KODO Design Come Together, Great Things Happen

By Mazda

Stylish, luxurious and created with world-class Japanese craftsmanship, Mazda’s CX-5 strikes a formidable pose.

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STEINBERG

Jim Steinberg

Jim Steinberg is a national-award winning environmental writer. He also covers medical and healthcare issues, drones and aviation, military and the cities of Fontana and Rialto.

Follow Jim Steinberg @JamesDSteinberg

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If you see comments that you find offensive, please use the “Flag as Inappropriate” feature by hovering over the right side of the post, and pulling down on the arrow that appears. Or, contact our editors by emailing moderator@scng.com.
ONTARIO >> Month after month the reports say it all: passenger traffic at Ontario International Airport is slowly rebounding.

In the next step to bumping up routes and passenger activity, the airport's governing body has begun offering incentives to any carrier that can bring new commercial flights from Asia, Europe, New Zealand and South America.

The Ontario International Airport Authority agreed Thursday morning to waive landing and terminal fees for up to one year to any carrier that starts service from those regions.

Commissioner Ron Loveridge said the launch of the Air Carrier Incentive Program is in line with what the authority vowed to do once it took over local control of the airport Nov. 1.

“It's part of the concept of Ontario, rather than passively accepting what's happening we create new opportunities, and incentives are an important way to do that,” he said.

But as Loveridge pointed out, there are 4 million people that visit Ontario on an annual basis compared to the nearly 80 million annual passengers at Los Angeles International Airport, and “we're still a small player, but we have a goal.”
For now, the authority's main focus of the incentive program will be passenger service to Asia and Europe, said the authority's interim CEO Mark Thorpe.

“Asia is such a great opportunity because 54 percent of all passenger demand that originates in Southern California, for travel to Asia, comes from zip codes closer to Ontario airport than LAX,” Thorpe said following the meeting. “When you look at mainland China it’s 65 percent, and when you look at Vietnam it is 70 percent.”

The demand for European flights originates closer to coastal communities, he said. Based on that information, Thorpe said, Ontario airport could support service to three or four cities in Europe such as London or Paris.

But in all of Southern California, the demand to Asia is greater than Europe, Thorpe said. Ontario airport could handle 10 new cities from the Asian market, including Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Seoul.

“A lot of the people that are flying out of LAX today live closer to our airport,” Thorpe explained.

Ontario airport officials tout that ONT is a more convenient airport than LAX for 10.3 million of Southern California's 18 million residents.

The authority is actively meeting with dozens of airlines around the world about adding new service, he added.

Officials expect to announce Friday new service from an Asian airline that will provide nonstop flights to Ontario. Although he did not name the airline, Thorpe said the carrier could qualify for the incentive program.

“This will also be the first time there will be a transoceanic flight from any Southern California airport other than Los Angeles in the history of the region,” Thorpe told the board.

Up until now, most of the international service out of Ontario has been to Mexico. There was a short-lived flight from Ontario to Ontario in 2000, he added.

Under the incentive program, an air carrier would have to apply and be approved by the authority's CEO. It could also be eligible to receive marketing support from the OIAA. If a carrier begins service to Beijing, then the authority would not offer incentives to another carrier that flew to the same destination, he told the commissioners.

“There's a fair understanding that airlines that start new service need to be able to be successful in that first year,” Thorpe said. “It's really expensive to start a new service, there's much more of an investment with a flight like this than there is with a flight to Chicago, so we want to support them any way we can. When you provide airport cost relief and marketing support, it helps fiscal success on that route become more achievable.”

The program is now in effect and will expire June 2021.

The incentive program will be available to any airline for international service but does not apply to domestic service, he said.

“As the airport continues to grow, we think service to those domestic markets will come back,” Thorpe said. “For the domestic airlines, our ability to continue to lower costs at the airport is going to be a defacto incentive.”

The authority has slowly been making improvements to the facility to prepare for an influx of new international service.

At last month's meeting, the authority signed off on ordering two boarding ramps that could accommodate wide-body aircraft, which carriers use for long distance flights. Commissioners also agreed to improve its Federal Inspection Station which will allow an increase in the airport's customs and immigration services, which again, would be needed if the frequency for international service improved.

Ontario is the only other airport in Southern California that can handle long haul, or nonstop flights, because of the runway length, Thorpe said.

Julia Gouw, who was sworn in as the newest commissioner Thursday, said most travelers are looking for two things: direct flights and a quick security screening process.

“Ontario would be very convenient for most Asians because they live in the east San Gabriel Valley and not on the west side,” she said. “It’s so much more convenient for us than going to LAX, but if there’s no direct flights to Asia then you can’t use Ontario.”
LOCAL NEWS

Waterman Gardens transformation continues with first 62 new apartments on site

SAN BERNARDINO >> Omekia Candelaria was afraid to let her children out of her sight during the 15 years she lived at Waterman Gardens.

Drugs and other crime were endemic in the 252-unit public housing complex. And although she was thankful for the relatively good condition of her apartment, it was built in 1943 and showed its age.

That's all changed now for her and the residents of 61 other apartment units on Olive Street, southeast of Base Line and Waterman Avenue.

Those new apartments were unveiled Friday — the first built on the site of Waterman Gardens as part of a project that will eventually transform the site into 411 new units, community centers and supportive services designed to end the cycle of poverty.

The change is apparent inside Candelaria's scrupulously clean apartment, where her family has lived since Aug. 17.

“They were jumping up and down when we moved, it was so exciting,” Candelaria said of her daughters, 18 and 15, as she showed off her new apartment Thursday. “Now we're getting to know our neighbors, and it feels so different. It's a real blessing.”
Thursday's ribbon cutting came about a year after workers knocked down the first building for the phase, known as Olive Meadow at Arrowhead Grove.

Arrowhead Grove is the new name developers are using for the complex known as Waterman Gardens ever since the San Bernardino County Housing Authority built it 74 years ago. The new project also includes 76 off-site units at the northwest corner of Valencia Avenue and Ninth Street, which were opened in December.

The impact isn't meant to end at the project's borders, said Steve PonTell, president and CEO of National CORE, the Rancho Cucamonga-based nonprofit group leading the multi-agency revitalization effort.

“The transformation that is occurring in and around Arrowhead Grove is a great example of the power of collective impact and how a well-planned, well-designed and well-managed housing community can be a catalyst for change for an entire community,” PonTell said.

As an example, he pointed to the doughnut store that for years had attracted long lines on the northeast corner of Baseline and Waterman, across the street from the apartment complex.

“We saw a Yelp review saying, ‘I don't know how long it's been since they sold a doughnut, but there are a lot of people there for something else,’” PonTell said. “We worked with law enforcement and the city to get that place closed.”

And stable housing can help in many other areas, such as academic success, truancy and behavior problems, said San Bernardino County Supervisor Josie Gonzales.

“This project that we're celebrating today is part of a complete rehabilitation that will affect so many areas,” Gonzales said.

Each of the Arrowhead Grove apartments is occupied, and many of the residents used to live at Waterman Gardens. Residency requirements at the new complex include an income between 30 percent and 60 percent of the area median income. The median income in San Bernardino County is $63,200, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Housing is urgently needed in San Bernardino County, which will require another 69,000 new homes just to meet its anticipated growth — not counting housing to take care of others such as those who are currently homeless — Gonzales said, citing the Building Industry Association.

Support for residents will extend past the complex itself to support services, said Gregory Bradbard, president of the Hope Through Housing Foundation.

“We're going to continue helping with tutors, with financial literacy, with other services to help lift them up,” Bradbard said. “The idea is that this isn't a landing pad, it's a launch pad. For the children who are here now, we're going to break the cycle.”

The total cost of Arrowhead Grove was estimated in 2014 at $150 million to $200 million.

An end date for the entire transformation isn't clear, as it depends on lining up funding sources for each successive phase, said Maria Razo, executive director of the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino.

“We can see from where we are the work that still needs to be done,” Razo said, nodding toward the still-occupied units of the rest of Waterman Gardens. “And we're looking forward to continued redevelopment for the residents. It's all about helping them.”

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Family-Friendly Fun in Utah: Experience a Real Bison Roundup

By Utah Office of Tourism

Antelope Island's annual bison round-up takes place on a stunning landscape, making this event a wonderful...
5 Things to do this weekend in and around the High Desert

1. **Calico Days**: The glory days of Calico will be relived as Calico Ghost Town presents the annual Calico Days Celebration. The town will come alive with music, shows and games for every age that will recall the days when silver mining was king. Between the music and games, make sure to take a stroll through the Old West encampments on Main Street.

   When: 9 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.

   Where: Calico Ghost Town, 36600 Ghost Town Road, Yermo.

   Cost: $10 for adults, $5 for children 4-11 and free for children 3 and under.

   Information: Call 800-862-2542 or visit cms.sbcounty.gov/parks/parks/calicoghosttown.aspx

2. **Happy Trails Parade and Street Fair**: Join The Village for its beloved Happy Trails Parade and Street Fair. The event will include a classic car show, food, vendors, music, and more.

   When: 10 a.m. Saturday.

   Where: The Village, business district runs along Highway 18 between Navajo Road on the west to Mesquite Road on the east, and from Ottawa Road on the south to as far north as Esaws Avenue. The parade route is between Central and Pawnee roads on Outer Highway 18.

   Cost: Free.

3. **The Big Bear Gran Fondo Mountain Bike**: Cycling enthusiasts will not want to miss this ride. The Big Bear Gran Fondo Mountain Bike ride offers participants different routes to fit all skill levels. From the tame 20K Skyview, which takes you up the Snow Summit Scenic Sky Chair, to the 50K Skyline course, you’ll enjoy the best riding that Big Bear has to offer. And if you’re looking for more challenge and adventure, check out the Grizzly 100K or 75K Over the Top NUE options.

When: 7 a.m.

Cost: $65 to $150 depending on race.

Information: Visit: bbvrace.com

4. **Holiday Inn comedy and karaoke**: HA HA Live at the Holiday Inn is hosting a night of karaoke and comedy at the Community Table Restaurant inside the hotel. Half-priced drinks and appetizers will be provided from 8 to 9 p.m with a two item minimum purchase. Nabeel the Extremist will be headlining, with featured comic Doug Gonzales and special guests Jessica Rosas and Greg Buckman. Music will be provided by DJ Spike.

When: Karaoke begins at 8 p.m, comedy begins at 9 p.m. Saturday.

Where: Holiday Inn, 15494 Palmdale Road, Victorville.

Cost: $10.

Information: Call 909-547-5153.

5. **Relay for Life**: Team up with friends and family to take up the fight against cancer at Relay for Life’s superhero event. Over 30 teams are already signed up to camp out for 24 hours where local cancer heroes will share their compassion, time and energy to help local cancer survivors and their families. Anna Sugi, former CEO of Choice Medical Group and founder of the Today’s Woman Foundation, will be honored after dedicating much of her life to women’s health. She passed away with an aggressive form of triple negative breast cancer in 2009.

When: Opening ceremony begins at 9 a.m. Saturday.

Where: 14955 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley.
Cost: Free.

Information: Call 760-887-3427 or visit

[www.facebook.com/events/429925950694854](http://www.facebook.com/events/429925950694854)
The Twentynine Palms Historical Society will hold its annual weed show the first weekend in November. This year’s theme is "No Business Like Old Business" and celebrates the old businesses of Twentynine Palms. Managing editor Tami Roleff has all the categories for entering your composition in the show...

The 2017 Weed Show categories showcase the former businesses of Twentynine Palms. Miniature compositions, three square inches and six square inches, are 29 Palms Gemcrafts and Dixie Donuts. Two categories involve purple glass: Sparkle Plenty for flawless glass, and Sam’s Character Room for broken glass. Other categories include Ma Penn’s, Pill Hill, Starlight Rollerink, 29 Palms Lumber, The Desert Trail, and Sabol’s Trading Post. Benton Brothers is for oversized compositions; and the category for kids 12 and under is The Paint Pot. Entries will accepted Friday, November 3 from 4 to 6 p.m. and Saturday, November 4 from 7 to 9 a.m. sharp. Complete rules and information can be found at https://www.29palmshistorical.com/WeedShow.php
PUBLIC'S HELP SOUGHT IN FINDING MISSING YUCCA VALLEY MAN

By Z107.7 News, on September 29th, 2017

The Sheriff's Department is asking for the public's help in locating a missing man. Jamie Hermes, 58, was reported missing by his sister August 8. Hermes, who is homeless, normally frequents the eastern Stater Brother grocery store and the area of Yucca Trail and Pioneertown Road. Hermes suffered a brain injury 20 years ago and is mentally impaired. He was last seen in July near the eastern Stater Brothers store and has not been heard from since. He does not have a cell phone. Hermes has a tattoo that says "Bad Boy" on his right arm and also goes by the name of Jamie Fallin. The public is encouraged to call the Sheriff's Department at 760-366-4175 with any information.
Ongoing donation drive in Colton helps Puerto Rico

Jose Trinidad walks on what's left of his home in Montebello, Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2017. Five days after the Category 4 storm slammed into Puerto Rico, many of the more than 3.4 million U.S. citizens in the territory were still without adequate food, water and fuel. Flights off the island were infrequent, communications were spotty and roads were clogged with debris. Officials said electrical power may not be fully restored for more than a month. (AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)

COLTON >> A donation drive will collect supplies to help with the impact of recent hurricanes on Puerto Rico from 10 a.m to 5 p.m. every day until a collection Saturday.

Emergency supplies will be collected at GT Sew & Vac+ at 1231 E Washington St., Suite E.

Bottled water, baby wipes, hand sanitizer, diapers, canned foods and other emergency supplies will be collected.

Groups collaborating on the donation drive include The California Puerto Rican Parade Association, Christian Motorcyclists Association, Iglesia Pan de Vida and Super Penny Mart.

“We're hoping we can get as many people to help as possible,” said Osvaldo Vazquez, vice president of the Victory Riders, the Inland Empire chapter of the Christian Motorcyclists Association, who's Puerto Rican. “We've got my mom over there. I barely spoke with her last night. There's no water, no electricity. ... So it's a pretty bad situation over there.”

Information: 909-825-6009
When grocery service Instacart is coming to Menifee, Hemet and Redlands

Instacart has announced a big expansion in the Inland Empire less than two months after entering the market.

The grocery delivery service will reach 1.3 million additional homes in Southern California beginning Wednesday, Oct. 4.

Instacart’s Aug. 8 expansion reached 1 million Southern California households and brought the service to nearly four dozen Inland locations.

While much of next week’s expansion will be in Los Angeles County, it will reach some prominent parts of the Inland Empire that were left out in August, such as southwest Riverside County and cities along the 10 Freeway east of San Bernardino.

Customers enroll in Instacart and then order groceries online from merchants that partner with the company. A “personal shopper” then fills the order and delivers the groceries. The fee is $5.99 for orders larger than $35.

There is also an Instacart Express membership option for unlimited free delivery on orders $35 or more. The cost is $14.99 a month after a free trial period.
There's a promotion for first-time users, who can get $20 off their order and free delivery by using the code HEYLOSANG at checkout. The offer expires Nov. 28.

San Bernardino-based Stater Bros. is among the partners. It promoted Instacart Wednesday at the opening of its 171st store in Riverside's Mission Grove Shopping Center with posters and a signup table near the entrance.

Other Inland partners include Costco, CVS, Petco, Smart & Final, and BevMo.

Inland shoppers can't buy groceries from stores that are out of range such as Grow, a new Instacart partner that has one store in Manhattan Beach.

Information: www.instacart.com

New Instacart service areas

Riverside County: Temecula, Homeland, San Jacinto, Lakeview, Hemet, Romoland, Sun City, Lake Elsinore, Canyon Lake, Menifee, Wildomar, Perris, Calimesa, Beaumont, Moreno Valley, Murrieta, Mead Valley, Banning, Cherry Valley, Nuevo

San Bernardino County: Redlands, Yucaipa, Highland, Loma Linda, Oak Glen


Tags: Top Stories PE, Top Stories RDF

How Many Cigarette Butts Are Tossed Out Each Year?

By Tobacco Free CA

Cigarette trash is a dirty problem, made by an even dirtier industry. It's time for Big Tobacco to come clean about...

Fielding Buck

Fielding Buck has been a business reporter since 2014 with a focus on logistics, supply chain and GIS. Prior experience includes extensive entertainment reporting. He loves photography and dogs and lives in San Bernardino County.

Follow Fielding Buck @pefbuck

Join the Conversation

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If you see comments that you find offensive, please use the “Flag as Inappropriate” feature by hovering over the right side of the post, and pulling down on the arrow that appears. Or, contact our editors by emailing moderator@scng.com.
A 2-year-old Apple Valley girl is in intensive care after her father accidentally fired the handgun he was cleaning and struck her in another room, authorities said.

Deputies sent to a home in the 16100 block of Viho Road about 11:25 p.m. Wednesday discovered the girl with a gunshot wound, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department.

The girl's father had been cleaning his gun downstairs when it discharged, sending a bullet into an upstairs bedroom.

The girl was struck in the abdomen, said James Peratt, a battalion chief for the Apple Valley Fire Protection District.

She was transported to St. Joseph Health, St. Mary then flown by Mercy Air to Loma Linda University Medical Center, where she underwent surgery, Peratt said.

No arrests have been made. The investigation is ongoing.

corina.knoll@latimes.com
@corinaknoll

UPDATES:

11:35 p.m.: This article was updated with details from the Apple Valley Fire Protection District.

This article was originally published at 11:10 a.m.
NEEDLES — The California Highway Patrol says a bus carrying dozens of students was involved Thursday in a crash with two big rigs near the Arizona border, causing minor injuries.

Authorities say the bus was stopped at a construction zone on State Route 95 near 5 Mile Road near Needles shortly before 1 p.m. Thursday when it was rear-ended by a semi-truck and pushed into another big rig.

The bus was carrying a volleyball team from Buckeye Union High School in Arizona to a game against the Mohave varsity team in Bullhead City, Ariz.

The school district says 30 students and three coaches were aboard and the only injuries appear to be bumps and bruises.

The CHP says about eight students complained of pain, with five examined at hospitals.

The driver was briefly trapped on the bus, but was quickly freed by rescue personnel.

The crash for a time shut down State Route 95 in both directions, according to CHP officials.
Missing Muscoy man with Alzheimer’s found

Authorities are searching for 78-year-old Jose Zaragoza of Muscoy who suffers from Alzheimer’s Disease.

By BEATRIZ E. VALENZUELA |
PUBLISHED: September 28, 2017 at 9:21 am | UPDATED: September 28, 2017 at 10:06 am

A 78-year-old Muscoy man with Alzheimer’s disease who reported missing Wednesday afternoon has been found, San Bernardino County sheriff’s officials said Thursday morning.

Jose Zaragoza walked away from his home on Darby Street in Muscoy around 1 p.m. Wednesday, officials said in a news release.

Authorities announced at 10 a.m. Thursday that he had been found.
Here’s how you can honor three Inland firefighters on Saturday

Three Inland firefighters who died from job-related cancer will have their names inscribed into the California Firefighters Memorial during a ceremony scheduled for 11:30 a.m. Saturday at Capital Park in Sacramento.

Corona firefighters Randy Albert Brunet and Timothy Joseph Hull, as well as Cal Fire/Riverside County firefighter Sara Felix Thomas are among the 31 California firefighters to be honored.

The memorial is 15 years old and has the names of 1,300 firefighters inscribed on its wall.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra will be among those speaking at the ceremony.

Brunet served nearly 25 years with the Corona Fire Department. He rose to the rank of captain and was also vice president of the Corona Firefighters Local 3757. He died in January from complications of job-related cancer.

Timothy Joseph Hull spent 29 years with the Corona Fire Department. He worked as a firefighter and engineer during his career. Hull, as lead negotiator for the Corona firefighters union, was credited with getting Corona firefighters top wages, reasonable hours and good working conditions. He died from job-related cancer in 2012.

Thomas is one of five women to be honored in the ceremony, the most in a single year.

She became a firefighter in 2000 with Cal Fire's Monte Vista unit in San Diego County. Thomas most recently was assigned to the Riverside County Fire Department, working out of Coachella Valley and north Indio. She died in January from job-related cancer.

The ceremony is open to the public and it will be streamed live at cafefoundation.org, hovering over “Programs,” clicking on “California Firefighters Memorial” and then clicking on “More information and live video stream here.”

The ceremony will also feature a uniform procession and family members will receive an American flag.

There will also be a tribute and candlelight vigil for all the fallen firefighters from 6:30 p.m. Friday at the memorial site.
Recent reports from the Institute of Applied Research at California State University, San Bernardino indicate that perceptions of the Inland economy and quality of life have continued to improve in recent years.

According to the latest monthly Inland Empire Report on Business, continued economic growth in the region, as reflected by the Purchasing Managers’ Index, has been matched with persistently greater optimism among purchasing managers about the state of the local economy.

Approximately 38 percent of purchasing managers surveyed last month predicted the local economy will become stronger in the next few months, a level of optimism greater than seen in 2015 and 2016.

Such optimistic perceptions come despite the fact that California's regulatory and taxation policies have arguably only gotten worse, while uncertainty over a litany of issues at the federal level continues to loom.

Meanwhile, the IAR also came out this month with its 20th Inland Empire Annual Survey, which measures public perception of quality of life issues among a representative sample of San Bernardino County residents.

Among the notable takeaways is that while still below pre-recession levels, the number of residents who rated San Bernardino County’s economy as “excellent” or “good” continued to rise in 2017, with 32 percent of respondents providing such answers. This compares to just 9 percent in 2010 and 46 percent from 2004 through 2006.
Such optimism was more prevalent in some communities than others. While over 40 percent of residents in Chino Hills, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Chino and Rialto assessed the county’s economy as “excellent” or “good,” fewer than 25 percent of residents in Barstow, Highland, San Bernardino and Yucaipa could say the same.

Though slightly down from last year, 45 percent of those surveyed believe they will be better off a year from now, much higher than the 33 percent seen in 2012 and close to pre-recession levels.

While such surveys are just snapshots of how people are feeling at a given time, the region is objectively far better off today than it was a few years ago, and the surveys reflect that. Still, there is more work to be done, especially in communities like San Bernardino and in the High Desert.
Strength in numbers: Hispanics now the majority in Inland Empire

By Rene Ray De La Cruz
Staff Writer

Victorville — Data from the recent Census Bureau’s American Community Survey has found that Hispanics are now a majority in the Inland Empire.

The report revealed Hispanic residents now make up 50.5 percent of the I.E. population, with San Bernardino County coming in at 52.8 percent, about 10 percent higher than all of Southern California.

The I.E. is defined as the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan areas, which includes Riverside and San Bernardino counties, according to the Census Bureau.

The report showed that white and non-Hispanic populations fell to 32.8 percent for the I.E., nearly equal to 33.5 percent in the rest of Southern California and 29.2 percent for the county. It also showed the population of African-Americans and Asians came in at about 7 percent in the I.E.

The High Desert Hispanic Chamber of Commerce reported that in 2015, the estimated number of Hispanics living in the Victor Valley consisted of: 58 percent in Adelanto, 49 percent in Hesperia, 48 percent in Victorville and 29 percent in Apple Valley.

The Census Bureau’s data also showed some improvements have occurred in the quality of life for the area, while it continued to become more diverse, according to Inland Empire Economic Partnership Chief Economist Dr. John Husing.

“These data underscore key issues facing the region that are at the forefront of work being undertaken in the region to deal with its great diversity while improving its quality of life,” Husing said. “Fortunately, the quality of life measures are slowly improving.”

Iris Gutierrez, CEO of the High Desert Latin Heritage Coalition, told the Daily Press the I.E. Hispanic population may be more than 50 percent, but more work needs to be done to bridge the gap in order to intermingle cultures into every sector of society.

“Strength in numbers has never rang more true,” said Gutierrez, a board member with the HD Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. “I continue to be involved in sector crossover with my own programs, and with many other organizations.”
Several local Hispanic leaders told the Daily Press the lack of cultural integration may stem from fear of the unknown or American culture, which prevents many from pursuing opportunities in education, business, home ownership, health and fitness.

Gutierrez, whose group hosted the 4th Annual High Desert Latina Summit at Victor Valley College over the weekend, said she’s seen a positive, thriving union that wants the “betterment of community one soul at a time.”

“Latinos simulate in the workforce, and law and order,” Gutierrez said. “Outside of that, we still hold old values, presence of honor, loyalty and simplicity.”

The Census Bureau’s report also revealed the “continued decline” in the number of uninsured I.E. residents, largely thanks to the Affordable Care Act. Before the ACA went into effect in 2012, there were 750,957 residents with no health insurance, representing 28.8 percent of the population. By 2016, that number had fallen to 336,238 or 12.4 percent of local residents.

The report also stated that poverty remains a major concern for the region, but it has improved somewhat. In 2016, 17.7 percent of county residents were living below the poverty line, down from 19.0 percent in 2015. For children under 18, the county share was 26.0 percent, down from 27.4 percent.

In education, among adults 25 and over, the share that stopped their schooling with high school or less fell slightly to 47.6 percent in 2016 from 47.8 percent the year before in the county.

Meanwhile, the share with four-year or higher degrees grew slightly, reaching 20.0 percent in the county, up from 19.4 percent. That figure, however, was well below neighboring counties in Southern California, which ranged from 30.8 percent to 32.2 percent.

Rene Ray De La Cruz may be reached at 760-951-6227, RDeLaCruz@VVDailyPress.com or on Twitter @DP_ReneDeLaCruz.
Riverside County Supervisor John Tavaglione on Wednesday, Sept. 27, became the second supervisor to endorse Hemet police Chief Dave Brown for sheriff, providing another boost to Brown’s campaign to unseat Sheriff Stan Sniff.

“First and foremost, I know Chief Brown will not only be a forceful and effective advocate for the Sheriff’s Department, but he’ll also be willing to work collaboratively with elected officials, community stakeholders, and other agencies in order to keep our communities safe,” Tavaglione said in a Brown campaign news release.
“... Simply put, Dave Brown is the proven law enforcement professional we all need to get behind to lead the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department into the 21st Century. I am proud to endorse him.”

In an emailed statement, Sniff said: “It is disappointing but not unexpected, given the spirited current debate over county budget priorities, that my longtime friend John Tavaglione has decided to support a candidate who might not speak so candidly about the effects of county budget cuts on the Sheriff’s Department – cuts that have forced a dramatic workforce drawdown, bare-bones staffing levels, and an undersized county jail system.”

“For the past decade, the Sheriff’s Department has met all budget targets set forth by the county, while also providing a clear, expert, independent voice on law enforcement needs, deputy protection, and countywide public safety,” Sniff added.

Supervisor Chuck Washington threw his support behind Brown earlier this month. In an interview, Washington said the county needs a sheriff who is more willing to work with the Board of Supervisors on spending.
Having two supervisors in his corner helps Brown in several ways. Besides giving legitimacy to Brown's campaign, Washington and Tavaglione can donate money to Brown or encourage their donors to write checks to the Brown campaign, an important factor with Sniff sitting on close to $374,000 in campaign funds as of June 30.

Brown's campaign also announced the support of all five Hemet City Council members.

Besides Brown, who is retiring from the Hemet Police Department at year's end, sheriff's Lt. Chad Bianco, who ran against Sniff in 2014, is again challenging the sheriff. Bianco has the endorsement of the deputies' union, the Riverside Sheriffs' Association.

The race for sheriff has split the five-member Board of Supervisors. Supervisors Marion Ashley and Kevin Jeffries are backing Sniff, while Supervisor V. Manuel Perez thus far is neutral.

In recent years, a series of new, ongoing and inflexible costs have outpaced revenue growth.
Public safety spending consumes three-fourths of the county’s discretionary funds, according to the county executive office, which warns that further cuts to nonpublic safety departments will endanger those agencies’ missions.

Supervisors spent $40 million on consulting firm KPMG to find savings and efficiencies, with many of KPMG’s recommendations focusing on how the Sheriff’s Department can do its job in a more cost-effective manner. Those ideas include changing how deputies are scheduled and using non-sworn personnel to address low-level, non-emergency calls.

An elected department head who cannot be fired, Sniff, who has been sheriff since the board appointed him to fill a vacancy in 2007, insists he runs a tight ship and that his cost increases stem from raises supervisors gave to unionized employees in 2012.

Earlier this year, Sniff said he’s lost hundreds of employees to attrition to meet the budget target set by supervisors. He warned that deputy patrols in unincorporated areas are down to bare-bones levels and at one point said he needed at least $50 million more in funding in the upcoming county budget or he’d have to look at closing patrol stations.

Tensions between Sniff and Tavaglione came to a head during a July board meeting, when Tavaglione accused Sniff of fighting KPMG and publicly bad-mouthing supervisors.
OPINION

City-sized development would hurt county’s public health, wildlife

Ducks and geese float on a pond at the San Jacinto Wildlife Area in this March 2016 file photo. (Press-Enterprise staff file photo)

By J.P. ROSE |
September 28, 2017 at 1:49 pm
Riverside County's Planning Commission is poised to greenlight a mega-development. The project would fundamentally transform the rural Nuevo community, worsen air pollution and gridlock, and threaten a wildlife area that Californians paid millions of dollars to protect.

It's an example of urban sprawl at its worst. Thankfully, residents have an opportunity to stop it by voicing their opposition before the commission's Oct. 4 vote.

Villages of Lakeview would cram a city of 36,000 people next to the San Jacinto Wildlife Area, endangering wildlife and public health. Incredibly, this is virtually the same project that a judge rejected five years ago because of its environmental impact.

The county's own environmental review concedes that the project would increase the imbalance between jobs and housing in the area. The Southern California Association of Governments says developments like this are far too intense for this rural portion of the county.

Villages of Lakeview exemplifies the outdated sprawl model that has led to the long commutes, horrible traffic jams and dangerously polluted air for which Southern California is infamous.

The American Lung Association's “State of the Air” report card gave Riverside County an “F” for its air quality — second only to San Bernardino County as the state's worst. The county's air pollution leads to illness and premature death as residents suffer from lung cancer, asthma and other health problems.

Villages of Lakeview would make things worse, locking in more traffic and air pollution in Riverside County.

If the project is approved, this would not be the first time the county put developers before the community.

In 2012, a Riverside County Superior Court judge rejected a nearly identical version of Villages of Lakeview because the county failed to disclose the health risks caused by the project. The court also said the county did not properly account for traffic and greenhouse gas impacts.

But instead of shelving the project, the Planning Commission is poised to approve it a second time.

That would take a tremendous toll on wildlife. Inserting a city of 36,000 people next to a sensitive wildlife area is the epitome of short-sighted land-use planning.
The 19,000-acre San Jacinto Wildlife Area was set aside for imperiled wildlife in 1979 and is enjoyed by hikers, bird watchers and hunters. It provides critical habitat for dozens of imperiled species in the region. And it serves as an outdoor classroom for local schools.

The noise, light, water pollution and intensive human activity from Villages of Lakeview will endanger wildlife that live in the refuge. Inevitably, there will be conflicts between people and wildlife — pet cats will kill rare birds near the refuge, and coyotes will end up eating residents’ pets.

The wildlife refuge is already under attack from other projects. The city of Moreno Valley recently approved the World Logistics Center, a 2,600-acre warehouse complex, near the refuge.

If that project moves forward, it would permanently lock up about 10 percent of the city's land for warehouse uses, add 14,000 truck trips per day to the area, and interfere with birds migrating on the Pacific Flyway to the refuge.

At the Planning Commission's Sept. 6 hearing, dozens of community members — including children — begged the commission to stop Villages of Lakeview. Very few people spoke in favor of it.

Community members will have a final chance Oct. 4 to tell planning officials the many reasons why Villages of Lakeview should be rejected. The commission should listen to the community and tackle the housing shortage by encouraging development in urbanized areas instead of approving more dangerous sprawl.

County residents have a right to clean air and healthy ecosystems. We can take a stand for California's natural heritage by resisting this short-sighted project.

*J.P. Rose is an attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity’s urban wildlands program.*
Beaumont City Councilman Mark Orozco pleaded guilty to one felony count of bribery and one felony count of perjury Thursday morning, Sept. 28.

Because of the plea, he’ll have to resign from his seat and cannot run for public office again.

Orozco, 40, is expected to be sentenced to three years of formal probation and six months of home confinement on Tuesday, Oct. 24. He also will be ordered to pay a $10,000 fine.

Orozco did not speak to the news media after the hearing in the Riverside courtroom of Judge Samuel Diaz Jr., but his attorney, David Greenberg, said he agreed to the plea agreement with prosecutors to avoid jail time.

“Mr. Orozco had the opportunity to plead and not get any jail time,” Greenberg said. “When push came to shove and all of the important things in his life were considered, the ability to be with his wife and children moved to the forefront.”
The plea

Orozco pleaded guilty to soliciting a bribe from Pardee Homes and to a new case of perjury filed Thursday, Sept. 28, for falsifying a campaign form.

On that form, prosecutors say he made it appear that fellow council member Nancy Carroll received a donation that she did not.

Riverside County District Attorney's Office investigators said they found that Orozco inappropriately controlled the Move Beaumont Forward PAC and used it to support candidates for the November 2016 Beaumont City Council election.

Carroll was elected and angered Orozco when she voted for Lloyd White as mayor and not him, a DA's office news release stated.

So Orozco told the treasurer of Move Beaumont Forward that he was going to retaliate for Carroll's vote and ordered the treasurer to falsify a campaign disclosure form to make it appear as if the purchase of political signs for Carroll's campaign was actually a cash donation, according to the release.

Carroll's campaign would not have had to report the signs but would have had to claim any monetary contributions, prosecutors said. After that falsification was made, emails circulated accusing Carroll of lying on her campaign disclosure forms resulting in the Fair Political Practices Commission receiving a complaint against her, prosecutors' release stated.

"He was responsible for the change. He was trying to make it seem that Nancy Carroll committed perjury," said Amy Barajas of the DA's Public Integrity Team, who prosecuted the case along with Emily Hanks.

"This is how he retaliated against her," Hanks said.

Carroll said she wasn't going to be intimidated by Orozco.

"My name was dragged through this because I stood up for the right thing for the council and the city," she said Thursday.

Bribe sought

The bribery conviction results from a grand jury indictment charging Orozco with soliciting a bribe from developer Pardee Homes.

After the death of Councilman Jeff Fox in January 2016, the Beaumont City Council appointed a replacement. Orozco solicited a $15,000 bribe from individuals at Pardee Homes. In exchange, Orozco promised he would vote for the pro-development replacement candidate that they favored, the District Attorney's office alleged.

Representatives from Pardee Homes refused to pay the bribe and instead reported the crime to the DA.

The other charges Orozco faces, which are related to lying on campaign forms when he unsuccessfully ran for county supervisor in 2014, will be dropped, prosecutors said.

"I am relieved the legal process is coming to closure with Mr. Orozco receiving his due process and justice being served," Beaumont Mayor Lloyd White said in a statement. "This has been a distraction for our community but not for our council. We have continued to move forward with the important issues that need to be addressed to continue the recovery of Beaumont and lay the foundation for a bright future for our community."

'Rebuilding Beaumont'

White said the scandal-scarred city — where seven former officials are accused of misspending city money — takes complaints of malfeasance seriously.

"In the coming weeks, a process to fill the vacated council seat will begin and our Council will soon be back to full strength," White said. "Until that time, we will remain focused on the business of rebuilding Beaumont."

Orozco was indicted in May by a grand jury on bribery and perjury charges and has been free on bail. He was indicted on one count of soliciting a bribe and nine counts of perjury and was accused of falsely identifying campaign funds on his required disclosure document – the Fair Political Practices Commission Form 460.

The indictment accused Orozco of falsely listing a $50,000 loan from himself related to his run for the seat on the Board of Supervisors.

He also was accused of one count of bribery, which was alleged to have occurred Jan. 13, 2016.

The accusations against Orozco were not related to the corruption case against seven former city officials accused of misspending city money.

Orozco, who was in court Thursday for a hearing, could have faced four years in prison on each count.

It is unclear how his conviction will affect his employment as a teacher in the Pomona Unified School District, from which he is on paid administrative leave, the district's spokesman said.
“Mark loves the city of Beaumont and Mark loves his family," Greenberg said. "Under all of the circumstances, we thought this is the best plan for him and the city and his family."

RECENT INLAND CORRUPTION CASES

Agency: San Bernardino County

Allegations: Four former county officials were accused of accepting bribes from a Rancho Cucamonga developer who received a $102 million settlement in a civil case he filed against the county.

When: A grand jury returned a 29-count indictment in May 2011.

The players: Developer Jeff Burum of Colonies Partners; former county Supervisor Paul Biane; former Supervisor and Assessor Bill Postmus; Mark Kirk, former top aide to former Supervisor Gary Ovitt; and James Erwin, former assistant assessor and former top aide to former Supervisor Neil Derry.

Result: Postmus pleaded guilty and agreed to testify against the other four defendants. In late August, a jury acquitted Burum, Kirk and Biane of all charges. A different jury deadlocked this month on Erwin's case and a judge dismissed all charges.

Status: Prosecutors announced last week they won't retry Erwin.

Agency: City of Moreno Valley

Allegations: Investigators from the Riverside County District Attorney's Office, FBI and IRS raided the offices of developer Highland Fairview and the homes of four Moreno Valley City Council members and a real estate broker with political connections as part of what they described as a political corruption investigation. In a related investigation and sting operation, one council member, Marcelo Co, was arrested on charges of accepting a $2.36 million bribe.

When: Bribery sting in January 2013, searches in April 2013

The players: Highland Fairview President and CEO Iddo Benzeevi, then-Moreno Valley Mayor Tom Owings, then-Councilwoman Victoria Baca, Councilman Jesse Molina, then-Councilman Marcelo Co and real estate broker Jerry Stephens

Result: Co was sentenced last year to five years in federal prison. Owings and Baca were both recalled from their council seats, but no charges were brought against them or others in the case. The FBI and District Attorney’s Office announced in April 2015 that they had concluded their investigation, but they offered no explanation.

Status: Inactive, but both agencies said they would reopen the case if new information came to light.

Agency: City of San Jacinto

Allegations: A 155-count indictment alleged a yearslong corruption scheme between developers and elected officials in San Jacinto. It included charges of bribery and laundering of campaign money that extended from City Council elections and votes to a 2006 Assembly race.

When: Charges filed in November 2009

The players: Four council members, James Potts, John Mansperger, Dale Stubblefield and Jim Ayres; developers and businessmen Stephen Russell Holgate, Scott Douglas Shaull and Robert Edward Osborne, Byron Jerry Ellison Sr.; and seven relatives of the elected officials

Result: All but one eventually took plea bargains, with some serving jail time. Osborne died before his case went to trial.

Status: Case concluded

Tags: city council, Top Stories PE, Top Stories RDF, Top Stories Sun

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Spied: The Truck That Offers What Others Don’t.

By Chevrolet Silverado

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In 1850, California’s first State Constitution created counties “as legal subdivisions of the state,” with a “unified” governance structure, vesting in them all executive, legislative and even judicial power. The structure is virtually unchanged, despite the state’s population increasing from fewer than 100,000 people to nearly 40 million people.

Today, a California county supervisor can represent a population larger than that of entire U.S. states. Nationally, nearly all high-population counties, such as Miami-Dade, Cook (Chicago), Harris (Dallas), and King (Seattle), have expanded their boards and separated the three governance functions, in keeping with our system of separation of powers.

The 2016 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury Report examined the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors’ functions and found serious management, accountability, executive and strategic-planning issues. Overall, it found alarming problems with the current governance structure, and recommended “The people of Los Angeles County would be better served with a greater number of supervisors.” The county board has refused to discuss the report, let alone heed its valid and pressing findings.

My measure, State Constitutional Amendment 12, allows an opportunity for all California voters to update and improve the county governing structure — gradually, to provide greater accessibility, accountability and management.
SCA12 proposes that any county with more than 5 million people, greater than the population of 27 individual states in the U.S., should have a legislative board exercising legislative authority with members that represent no more than the population in two federal congressional districts — approximately 1.4 million residents — along with a county executive with defined executive powers. Using the 5 million resident population threshold allows for gradual implementation as the populations of other counties grow over time.

SCA12 will not cost taxpayers more money, as the measure requires that the changes be cost-neutral, using existing funding levels, since each board member will serve fewer constituents. I welcome any additional proposals to strengthen cost controls.

This modest proposal for gradual, responsible change was approved Sept. 14 by the state Senate with a two-thirds supermajority, including 16 of 27 Democrats and 11 of 13 Republicans voting to support SCA12. While some opponents have erroneously claimed that “Sacramento politicians” are motivated to support SCA12 to create future jobs for themselves, the diversity of support across the state, transcending ideological and partisan lines, demonstrates that this measure and its benefits unify elected officials behind its righteous intent.

If approved by the state Assembly, SCA12 will go to the voters in November 2018 and, if it wins, will be implemented after the 2020 census.

Any change to governance in California must consider impacts on language, ethnic, racial and other minority groups. Los Angeles County’s white population is 37 percent of the total, but three (60 percent) of the supervisors are white; Latinos are nearly 48 percent of the population, but only one supervisor (20 percent) is Latino; and an Asian American has never served on the board. SCA12 will give these groups a fair chance to elect candidates of their choosing to county boards.

SCA12 balances the issue of “local and “state” control on governance. Counties derive their authority from the state Constitution, and substantive changes in governing bodies require a state constitutional amendment. With an eye on the future, California has previously placed initiatives on the ballot similar to SCA12. Furthermore, in the last three years alone, the Legislature has passed 103 county-specific bills. It is not only within the Legislature’s power to help shape and enhance local governance, but an established legal precedent.

By approving SCA12, California’s voters can ensure that counties have a responsive and just governance system based on the principles of fair representation and shared governance through checks and balances. These concepts are the bedrock of our system of government, in our great state and the nation as a whole.

Tony Mendoza, D-Cerritos, is a member of the California Senate, representing District 32.
L.A. County now has 58,000 homeless people. So why are there thousands fewer shelter beds than in 2009?

By Doug Smith

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017, 4:00 AM

“Live from skid row, it’s Tuesday night!” Pastor Dan shouted, beginning two hours of Christian music and prayer for worshipers arrayed on metal chairs in the spacious, white-walled chapel at the Union Rescue Mission.

Once the playful service ended, worshipers folded and stacked their chairs and began to unfurl cots. There weren’t enough for everyone.

“Blankets and sheets on the floor,” the resident concierge at the chapel doors told latecomers who had waited outside for admission. “Blankets and sheets on the floor.”

By lights out, 1,300 people were bedded in the five-story building in the heart of skid row, women overflowing into the chapel and men on mattresses on the floor of the day room.

The crush of bodies at the Union Rescue Mission is a snapshot of the deficiencies in L.A.’s shelter network.
The county has one of the nation’s largest homeless populations, but its ratio of shelter beds to homeless people is among the nation’s lowest. There is no overarching shelter policy and no budgeting process to fund more shelters when homelessness increases. With rare exceptions, public agencies in Los Angeles do not build and operate shelters.

Instead, contractors operate facilities that range from a few cots in a church storage room to hundreds of bunks lined end to end in converted industrial buildings. They compete for a pot of local and federal money that has been shrinking in recent years.

“We do not have a standard for temporary subsistence housing,” said City Councilman Marqueece Harris-Dawson, chairman of the council’s Homelessness and Poverty Committee. “I don’t think we have ever admitted that shelters are a permanent part of our society even though they’ve been here for as long as history has recorded.”

Even as L.A.’s homeless population has surged in recent years, spurring voters to approve two tax measures, officials have de-emphasized shelters in favor of
building new permanent housing and providing rental subsidies for market-rate housing.

Many L.A. officials say shelters do little to alleviate homelessness, arguing that they cost about the same as permanent housing and provide only brief respites from the streets.

So they have worked to reshape the shelter as a staging area where people stay briefly on the way to permanent housing. New funds have been directed toward bulking up housing and case management services at existing shelters rather than adding new beds.

As a result, there is now only one shelter bed available for every four homeless people — one of the nation’s lowest shelter bed rates, according to a Times analysis of federal housing data.

By comparison, there are about three shelter beds for every four homeless people in the nation’s 402 homeless services areas, the data showed.

The data appear to cast doubt on the widely held view that homeless people won’t go to shelters. The closer a city is to providing a bed for every homeless person, the fewer of its homeless people were found to be “unsheltered,” the data showed.

New York City is required under the state’s “Right to Shelter” law to provide a bed for all its homeless people. The city has the nation’s largest homeless population — about 70,000 — but spends about $1.7 billion a year on shelters and is relatively free of sidewalk encampments.

“We’re very proud of that fact we do not have tent cities the way other cities do,” said Shelly Nortz, deputy executive director for policy at the Coalition for Homelessness, which filed the 1979 lawsuit that led to the law and remains the court-appointed monitor of a consent decree.

Seattle, Salt Lake City and San Antonio all manage to shelter a much higher share of their homeless populations than Los Angeles County, where 58,000 people are homeless, including 43,000 who sleep on the streets.

The number of shelter beds has declined over the last eight years, according to Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority records. In 2009, the authority counted
just over 18,000 year-round homeless beds.

Of those, about 6,700 were emergency beds intended for stays of no more than six months, and more than 11,500 were transitional beds designed to allow clients up to two years to prepare for living independently.

By 2017 the total was down to just over 12,000 — 7,100 transitional and nearly 5,000 emergency beds. (Additionally, the Homeless Authority includes in its shelter count about 4,000 welfare and general-relief recipients who receive cash payments to stay in motels for up to a month.)

Few of L.A.’s roughly 280 shelters are in buildings designed for that purpose.

Aside from the long-established missions on skid row, there is one large shelter in the east San Fernando Valley and one in the city of Bell. The majority of others are scattered from the Eastside to South L.A., in facilities that include a converted hospital, single-family homes, warehouses, storefronts, armories and churches.

They average about 100 beds. The smallest has 12 and the largest — Union Rescue Mission — has 890 but routinely overflows.

Only about 60% of shelter beds receive money from the Homeless Services Authority, which distributes federal, county and city funds. The rest rely on private donations or cobble together grants targeting the mentally ill, veterans and parolees.
Many millions to spend, but what’s the best approach?

County voters in March approved Measure H, a sales tax increase that will bring in an estimated $355 million annually starting this fall.

A budget adopted in June by the county Board of Supervisors included $209 million over three years to improve the county’s shelter system.

But there are radically different visions of how that money should be spent.

For Andy Bales, chief executive of the Union Rescue Mission, nothing short of a crash program to get every homeless person off the streets is morally justifiable.

“I am haunted right now about the people who are on the streets,” Bales said. “I'm haunted by the families in South L.A. with kids wandering around with no place to stay.”

Bales and others who face homelessness daily want the city to adopt a New York model, with shelters for every person counted.
Local officials have far more limited plans.

“The simplistic response of saying, ‘Why don’t we put 47,000 people into shelter?’ — we’re not going to do that,” said Phil Ansell, head of the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative, referring to the total from the 2016 count. “We’re not going to have anywhere near that kind of increase in shelter.”

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The plan adopted by supervisors in June allocates enough money for 2,175 new units for individuals and families over three years.

The budget projects that more than 11,500 additional people would receive shelter annually as a result, based on the assumption that the beds would turn over on average every three months as clients move on to permanent housing.

Even if that optimistic goal is met, it would make only a small dent in the county’s street population.

But officials project a further net reduction in shelter beds. A 2016 analysis by the homeless authority said adding 2,279 shelter beds would erase the current shortage. But it also foresaw the elimination of nearly 3,000 beds of transitional housing, which provides for stays of up to two years.

To make up the difference, homeless officials are counting on aggressive measures to build and subsidize permanent housing for the chronically homeless. The largest slice of the Measure H budget, $216 million over three years, is dedicated to rental subsidies to move people from shelters — or directly off the street — into permanent housing.

Some 'housing first' advocates say shelters are part of the problem
In moving away from traditional shelters, key players in Los Angeles have embraced the so-called “housing first” model.

It aims to quickly arrange permanent housing for chronically homeless people and support them through case management and other services.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has made housing first a priority, and in recent years, the region’s most powerful advocacy groups — including the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, the California Community Foundation and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce — have aggressively promoted it.

They poured volunteer time and hundreds of thousands of dollars into Measure H, as well as the successful campaign for Proposition HHH, the city of L.A.’s $1.2-billion homeless housing bond.

Some housing-first advocates say shelters do a disservice to homeless people in the long run, by feeding and housing them without treating the mental or physical health issues associated with chronic life on the streets.

Elise Buik, president and chief executive officer of United Way, said shelters are sometimes so squalid that homeless people refuse to go to them.

“What frustrates me is there was for a while all this myth out there, ‘They don’t want to come in off the streets. They choose to be homeless,’” Buik said last fall during the Proposition HHH campaign. “We just found when we say, ‘Do you want to come into a shelter?’ they say no, but when we ask do they want to come into housing, they say yes.”

Money from the two tax measures is expected to provide 15,000 permanent units over the next decade.

For some service providers, that math doesn’t work.

"On the one hand that’s great,” said Pete White, founder of the L.A. Community Action Network. “However, there’s not enough shelter beds. We’re still decades away from housing every houseless person today.”
Upgrading L.A. shelters proves difficult

In 2015, the city and county increased funding, enabling the homeless authority to boost reimbursements for year-round shelters to $30 per bed per night, from $20.

The extra money allowed 18 shelters — with a total of more than 1,000 beds — to stay open 24 hours a day instead of 14, and to expand services.

The goal was to make shelter stays shorter by giving case managers more time with clients to work on housing. In theory, that would increase capacity without adding new beds, but the 23% rise in homelessness recorded this year has made it difficult to gauge any effect of the expanded hours.

A separate effort to create more beds sputtered this spring as city and county officials scrambled to extend the funding of 12 winter shelters scheduled to close in March. Ultimately, all but four of the sites closed.

The Homeless Services Authority, meanwhile, planned to add 1,075 new beds this year, but the effort is off to a slow start. The first step, a request for proposals, was not released until August.

Past notices have gone wanting as operators found that they could not beef up services in emergency shelters as required with the $30-per-night rate.

Christopher Callandrillo, the authority’s program director, said the rate will be bumped up to $40 per night, with some contractors getting $50 per night to support more intensive services.

Even then it isn’t clear there will be sufficient response to add 1,000 beds, Callandrillo said.

A prerequisite for obtaining a contract is having rights to the building the shelter will occupy. Few existing shelters have space to add beds, Callandrillo said, so applicants will have to find new locations that are both suitable for housing hundreds of people and acceptable to neighborhood groups.
Proposal: Put up 100 tents, housing 200 people each

None of those efforts strikes Bales, as sufficient.

“We really should treat this catastrophe for what it is,” he said, “A catastrophe.”

His vision for bridging the shelter gap calls for tents around the city — big tents. The first would be erected on the mission’s surface parking lot on San Julian Street.

“We’re going to house 200 single women every night,” Bales said, adding that he aims to recruit other churches to put up tents on their parking lots.

If his plan is eligible for Measure H money, fine, Bales said. If not, that doesn’t dampen his ambition.

“You can get a weatherproof tent structure for a lot less than you can build a building,” Bales said. “It would only take a hundred 200-person tents to get 20,000 off the streets tonight.”
The idea is not novel. The city of Pomona is building a tent shelter on city-owned land. And on Wednesday, San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer announced a plan to erect three industrial tents to shelter homeless residents.

But as summer edged to a close, it wasn’t clear when the first tent would go up in Los Angeles. In a desperate message on his blog, Bales said donations are down so much this year that his plans to start construction July 1 were put on hold.

Now Bales may have to do something he’s never done — shut the door on shelter seekers.

Many types of shelter

- The 17,801 Los Angeles County shelter beds in the January count were not all alike.
- 1,708 seasonal beds were open in December through March.
- Nearly half, 7,108, were transitional beds with stays of up to two years.
- 4,050 were funded by the Department of Public Social Services providing 16-day stays for welfare and general relief recipients with a possible 14-day extension.
- Only 4,953 beds were for crisis intervention.
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L.A. near bottom in sheltering homeless

Across America, more homeless people are sheltered in homeless services areas with higher shelter capacity. The Los Angeles area includes all of Los Angeles County except Glendale, Long Beach and Pasadena.

Homeless services area

U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development 2016 Housing Inventory County and 2016 Point in Time Count

Joe Fox / @latimesgraphics

Southern California building boom adds 35,700 construction jobs, tops in nation

If Southern California was a state by itself, it would be the biggest creator of construction jobs in the nation.

Construction bosses in the five-county region hired one-sixth of all new U.S. construction workers in the past year, and local pay hikes in the industry have easily doubled what’s handed out elsewhere.

With great debate circling about the region’s need for housing and infrastructure vs. the extra congestion that growth can create, local builders are busy — at a noteworthy pace. Here are eight things we learned about demand for the region’s construction workers, according to data from the Associated General Contractors of America and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

1. Construction bosses in Riverside and San Bernardino counties added 15,800 jobs in the 12 months ended in August, up 17 percent. The Inland Empire had the largest increase in construction work of any metro area in the nation.

2. Los Angeles County’s addition of 11,000 construction jobs (up 8 percent) was second followed by Las Vegas (up 10,900 jobs, 20 percent); Portland (up 8,500 jobs, 13 percent) and Tampa-St. Petersburg (up 7,400 jobs, 10 percent). Orange County added 6,100 jobs, or 6 percent, to tie Orlando for the No. 6 spot. San Diego added 2,800 jobs or 4 percent.
3. Southern California’s hiring spree — 35,700 jobs in the five counties — equaled 16 percent of the 214,000 construction jobs added nationwide in the past year. The region's 444,000 construction workers are just 6 percent of the industry's 6.92 million jobs nationwide.

4. At the state level, California added the most construction jobs in the year: an increase of 47,400 jobs, or a 6.1 percent jump. The No. 2 hiring spree was in Florida (up 35,000 jobs, or 7.3 percent); then Louisiana (up 15,300 jobs, or 11.1 percent); Texas (up 15,200 jobs, or 2.2 percent) and Nevada (up 11,600 jobs, or 15.3 percent).

5. Please note that Southern California hiring tripled the rest of the California's 11,700 new construction job. So, if the state was split into two, statistically speaking, the local building industry's hiring spree (35,700 jobs in the past year) was larger than any other state's increase in construction jobs.

6. Growing construction crews come as 62 percent of California construction bosses polled said they were challenged to find hourly craftsmen, and 27 percent said they expected hiring headaches to increase. Nationwide, unemployment of skilled construction workers is at a 17-year low.

7. Southern California is by no means alone in the building boom. Construction employment increased in 274 out of 358 U.S. metro areas in the past year. And yearly job gains were found in 34 states and Washington, D.C. Nationwide, construction jobs grew at a 3.2 percent pace over the 12 months vs. a 1.7 percent increase for all industries.

8. Pay data, from the 12 months ended in March, shows local construction bosses paying up to staff up: Orange County weekly wages rose 10.2 percent in a year; San Bernardino, up 9 percent; San Diego, up 8.4 percent; Riverside, up 7.9 percent; Los Angeles, 7.8 percent. Nationwide, construction wags rose 3.5 percent in the period and 4.8 percent statewide.

How much Orange County housing can you buy for $350,000?

**SEE:** $350,000 new home in Orange County? It's in the works in Rancho Mission Viejo