

An Infrastructure “Brown-out”

Steve Lopez of the L.A. Times wrote this summer about his frustration with black-outs and brown-outs caused by power shortages relating to the late-summer heat wave. The problem goes much deeper and permeates about every aspect of our City infrastructure.

The reality is that unconstrained development, both large and small, has soaked up virtually every bit of surplus infrastructure we have.

Schools

Westwood Charter recently was forced to inform a number of kids that there was no place for them at the school. The principal was forced to go door to door to confirm residency for many students.

Parks

The air conditioning at Westwood Rec. has been broken for years, often resulting in internal building temperatures of over 80 degrees. In some cases, classes and activities have had to be canceled. The de-humidifier in the pool area has not worked for years, resulting in mold, mildew and rusted components throughout the pool facility. The athletic field has deteriorated to the point where grass hardly exists.

Transportation

We all know the impact of development on traffic. Low-stress drives that once took minutes now take five times as long and drive stress levels through the roof. Waits at intersections have increased; speeds, decreased. Gridlock is frequent. It just shouldn't take an hour to get from Santa Monica to Century City.

Water

Century City condominiums have noticed decreased water pressure to their facilities. In fact, the pressure dropped so low that several pumps burned out. Residents throughout the Westside have noticed a decreased water quality, including sediments and odor.

Councilman Zine has publicly wondered if we have the water to allow for more development.

Power

Steve Lopez complained in his article about power outages. With increased development, during the last heat wave, demand was perilously close to exceeding supply. Aside from the aging power transmission infrastructure, we simply are consuming our “safety-margin” between what we consume and what we produce.

First Responders

The West L.A. Police have fewer officers than they had six years ago; yet, they must protect far more people. The police must protect 65 square miles with only seven “basic cars.

Station 92, which covers Tract 7260 and Century City, has not increased the number of firefighters and equipment it has available despite a dramatic increase in the number of residents it must protect. In Century City alone, projects approved and/or proposed will result in the night-time/residential population of Century City doubling and will also result in a dramatic increase in day-time population. Without a dramatic increase in equipment and firefighters, a natural or man-made emergency would leave many of us unprotected and left to fend for ourselves.

Power brown-outs and black-outs are quite obvious when they happen. The other infrastructure brown-outs are not as obvious, but are no less impactful.

One last note: The City is charged with producing a report called the “Annual Report on Growth and Infrastructure.” The report is supposed to “annually document what has actually happened to the City's population levels, housing construction, employment levels, and the availability of public infrastructure and public services...” It hasn't been done since 1998.

Weiss Recall Close But Did Not Make the Ballot Large Signature Count Seen by Recall as No-Confidence Vote for Weiss

The recall committee suggests that though they failed to get the 23,000 signatures they needed, the 20,000 they collected shows a clear no-confidence vote in Jack Weiss.

There were approximately 40,000 total votes cast in the 2005 CD5 election. Jack Weiss received 28,500 of those votes.

The recall effort collected about 20,000 signatures. This represents 50% of all votes cast in 2005 and a full 70% of votes that Weiss received in the 2005 election.

CityWatch (www.CityWatchla.Com) stated: “The Weiss Recall Campaign collected a little over 20,000 signatures. They needed 23,000. Considering the rough terrain they had to traverse, it's no wonder that many observers see this as a success story. A gang of we're-not-going-to-take-it-anymore citizens stand up to their city councilman and put him on his heels.”

They went on to say “Regardless of the post-recall spin, Weiss was concerned. As the LA Times said, he “was put in the uncomfortable position of seeking campaign donations to fight a recall even as he raised money for a 2009 election bid for city attorney.” And, he had to be somewhat surprised ... shocked? ... By the number of people who surfaced with the perception that he provides bad constituent service and was in the pockets of developers.

Even in his 2009 run for City Attorney, if any competition surfaces, this close call will become baggage along the campaign trail.”

“It's hard not to argue that the Weiss image was tarnished as a result of this experience.” (cont)

Weiss Recall Close... continued

“Even some of his city council colleagues spoke out publicly during the recall effort. Councilwoman Janice Hahn said the Weiss was not a people person and was in the wrong business. Dennis Zine was critical.”

“Even though the councilman survived the recall, as one noted analyst concluded, “It’s hard to come away from this thinking of Jack Weiss as a winner. Perhaps survivor is a better description.”

Sherman Oaks Homeowners Assn. President Richard Close told the Times: “I think that, even though this effort failed, Jack Weiss and other council members learned a valuable lesson that all politics is local. And, with a city councilperson it’s neighborhood issues that are most important.”

With the recall now over, Jack Weiss must still face the consequences of his failure to return laundered contributions and public matching funds (see KNBC Story). He will also have to face enhanced scrutiny over his City Attorney race fundraising which already shows a very strong bias toward certain developers. Signature totals and recall emails are at: www.RecallJackWeiss.Com .

Tract 7260 2008 Membership Drive Starts Nov 1.

The Tract No. 7260 board will be trying something new for 2008. We will be sending membership volunteers out door-to-door to talk about the benefits of Tract No. 7260. They will be working to increase membership as we enter another year of preserving property values and our quality of living.

Big items up for 2008: The Bellwood Project, a major Westfield expansion, a NEW huge project at 10000 Santa Monica Blvd., TWO Beverly Hills projects at Santa Monica/Wilshire, helping our schools, police, firefighters and more.

Tract No. 7260 No. 7260 Association, Inc.
2057 Kerwood Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Resident

Tract No. 7260
Homeowner’s
Association, Inc.

www.Tract7260.Org



Neighborhood Update

November 2007

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Membership Drive
Starts Nov. 1.**

Outreach@Tract7260.Org