



## Fear of a Caltrans double-cross prompts action

# 710 tunnel opponents hope for the best, but prepare for the worst

*"Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbors to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser — in fees, expenses, and waste of time" - Abraham Lincoln*

BY SARAH GAVIT  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

Since the State Route 710 North Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) / Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released more than three years ago the West Pasadena Residents' Association has been an active participant in the environmental impact process. Through formal responses to Caltrans we have carefully and consistently documented deep flaws in both the process and the tunnel impact analyses. With the expected Final EIR/EIS release this fall, the end game is near.

Although Caltrans has declared its intent to designate the Transportation System Management (TSM) / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) alternative (street improvements and traffic management) as

the 'preferred alternative' for implementation in the Final EIR/EIS, we have reason to believe that it may still be on a path to certify the tunnel analyses. This would clear the way for digging the tunnel alternative, if funding is secured at a later time. To prevent this, local and preservation organizations are prepared to sue Caltrans to designate the tunnel analyses invalid.

Over the past six months the WPRA and other like-minded organizations have engaged legal experts to establish a plan to eliminate the threat of any future tunnel. Executing the first step of that plan, key stakeholders including the WPRA, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Los Angeles Conservancy, Pasadena Heritage, the South Pasadena Preservation Foundation and the Westridge School on August 22 sent a letter to Caltrans.

*Continued on page 7*

## Save the date

*Stand by for more*

### What:

Fall social for  
West Pasadena Residents'  
Association members  
*An opportunity to  
communicate, collaborate  
and celebrate*

### When:

Sunday, October 28, 2018  
3-6 p.m.

### Where:

Hosts:  
Susan and George Kinney

### Cost:

Free to dues-paying  
WPRA members

## Pasadena sales tax proposal on the ballot

*Editor's note: The WPRA offers the following information to inform voters about two City of Pasadena measures on the November ballot. The WPRA board has not taken a position on these issues, but is providing, as a public service, brief summaries of the measures and of the arguments for and against them.*

Two measures addressing the sales tax rate in Pasadena will be on the ballot, each requiring approval by a majority of voters.

- Measure I would increase the sales tax rate in the city.
- Measure J is a non-binding "advisory"

measure to direct a portion of the increased tax revenue to Pasadena public schools.

The measures were placed on the ballot by a unanimous vote of the Pasadena City Council.

The current sales tax rate in the city is 9.5%, consisting of taxes assessed by the state, county and Metro. **Measure I**, if passed, would add an additional 0.75% city sales tax resulting in a sales tax-rate of 10.25% in Pasadena. This is the maximum sales tax rate allowed by state law. Further increases by any agency would not be permitted without changes to state law.

Most of the current sales tax revenue from sales in Pasadena supports county, state and

Metro programs, with only a small portion being returned to Pasadena. As a city sales tax, all of the new revenue generated by Measure I would remain with the city; no portion would go to the county, state or Metro.

This increase is estimated to generate approximately \$21 million annually in additional revenue, which would flow into the city's general fund, supporting city services, staffing and infrastructure.

As a sales tax, it would not apply to food purchased as groceries or to prescription medicine. It is not a property or income tax.

*Continued on page 3*

# Transparency and trust in City Hall? It is our *desiderio*.

BY DAN BEAL  
PRESIDENT, WPRA

Transparency and trust – words that have engendered a monumental national discussion. Here in Pasadena, we still aim to have transparency in our government actions and trust between government and residents. But it doesn't always work out that way.

One such issue is the design for Desiderio Park. The 2014 Draft and Final Environmental Impact Reports, which included amenities “consistent with the minimum standard set of amenities for neighborhood parks,” did not include a restroom, and specifically stated that a restroom was not envisioned. As cited in the Final Environmental Impact Report, neighborhood and community organizations, including the WPRA, opposed including a restroom. “Neighborhood parks” do not require one. In fact, several, such as Linda Vista and San Rafael parks, don't have them. And there are other restrooms nearby, including at the casting pond in the Arroyo, Area H near the Rose Bowl, and Brookside Park.

But City Council added one anyway.

The 2017 environmental review didn't include a restroom, and construction was approved in January 2018 without one. But somehow a restroom was added in March. And a huge one at that: The original proposal was for a nearly \$1 million, 875 square-foot structure, about half the size and all of the cost of a generous two-bedroom condo! When pushed, staff scaled that back somewhat to 625 square feet. That's still much larger than the existing restrooms nearby, and many more people use those areas every day than will use Desiderio Park.

Why a huge, expensive restroom that nobody in the area seems to want?

*“Something's happening here.  
What it is ain't exactly clear.”*  
Buffalo Springfield

July's Council session only discussed where to put the restroom. August's Finance Committee and Council sessions only discussed borrowing other park funds to pay for it – with agenda descriptions that gave no detail about what was involved (thank goodness for diligent residents). And that was bundled as one item with much-needed improvements to Jackie Robinson Park.

Why the stealth?

In September, Council denied Councilmember Madison's request to reconsider the park design,

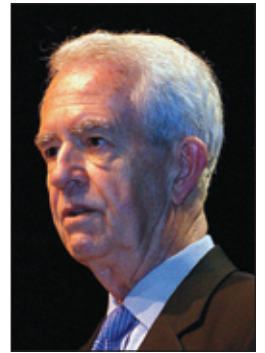
notwithstanding an outpouring of community support. Apparently a done deal is a done deal ... except, of course, when it isn't.

But a much more serious issue is the exposure to the horrors of suicides from the Colorado Street Bridge immediately above. There were 12 suicides from the bridge in 2017 and four to date in 2018. This is something I can speak to – decades ago, I came upon a person who had fallen from such a height. It still haunts me. This is a terrible burden for those who live in the area. I can't imagine the effect on children playing in the park. We just shouldn't open a park here without permanent and effective mitigation of the bridge suicide problem.

Why the rush?

“Desiderio” means “desire” or “wish” in Italian. The neighbors' wish is to slow this project down until we can agree on critical issues.

Why not?



Dan Beal

## About us

### 2018 – 2019 officers

- Dan Beal  
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- Avram Gold  
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- Blaine Cavena  
(treasurer@wpra.net)
- Justin Chapman  
(secretary@wpra.net)

**Mission:** Founded in 1962, the West Pasadena Residents' Association is dedicated to maintaining the character of our community and enhancing the quality of life in west Pasadena.

**Area:** The WPRA service area is bounded on the north by Colorado Boulevard, on the east by Fair Oaks Avenue and on the south and west by the city limits.

**Funding:** All WPRA activities are funded through membership dues and contributions. The WPRA receives no public funding and has no paid employees. Since the WPRA is a

501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation, contributions and donations are fully deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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The News is mailed each quarter to nearly 8,000 homes and businesses in the 91105 and 91103 ZIP codes and beyond.

**Editor:** Chuck Hudson  
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Visit our website at [wpra.net](http://wpra.net)  
Visit our Facebook page



Los Angeles County's Flood Control District will soon begin a massive sediment excavation and removal project at Devil's Gate Dam. The project will last more than five years and result in a major reduction in riparian habitat, excessive truck traffic and air-quality issues. (Photo by Bill Christian)

## 'Big dig' likely to start this November

BY BILL CHRISTIAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

Lawsuits filed by Arroyo Seco Foundation and Pasadena Audubon to challenge the size and scope of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District's (FCD) plan to remove nearly 2 million cubic yards of sediment and habitat from behind the Devil's Gate Dam have been dismissed after achieving some early success. Ultimately, the case fell prey to disappointing court rulings and FCD's refusal to compromise or collaborate with the City of Pasadena and other interested parties.

Assuming that the FCD receives promised final permit approvals from federal and state regulatory agencies, site activities will begin as soon as this November. The first stage will be removal of 70 acres of trees and other vegetation and construction of new access roads this fall, followed by sediment excavation and trucking operations commencing in the spring.

FCD will remove 1.7 million cubic yards of sediment over the course of four or five years, hauling the spoils to landfill locations using 210 freeway entrances in La Cañada Flintridge and Pasadena. FCD will employ heavy duty diesel tandem trailer trucks — making up to 400 roundtrips per day.

Intervention by Los Angeles County District 5 Supervisor Kathryn Barger resulted in a 30% reduction in the amount of total sediment removal. However, FCD has resisted making any changes to other key aspects of the sediment plan, despite the City of Pasadena's appeal to implement a slower and less extensive removal project. Thus, the project will still bring unacceptable features, which include the number of daily truck trips; the total acreage of riparian habitat that is to be disturbed — and that will remain — as an industrial site; inadequate provision for habitat restoration, and mitigation, traffic and air-quality issues.

In a somewhat ironic twist, the majority of mitigation to offset the destruction of the high-quality riparian habitat in the Arroyo Seco will take place in the high desert, on a site near Lancaster, pointing out the value and scarcity of Pasadena's Arroyo Seco natural areas and the FCD's troubling lack of regard for the interests of the city and its residents.

As the program start approaches, look for changes in recreational access to the area near Devil's Gate Dam; additional, heavy 210 freeway traffic, and noise; and dust and diesel exhaust emissions in surrounding neighborhoods.

## Sales tax proposal

*Continued from page 1*

- **Proponents** argue that city expenses for services, staffing and infrastructure continue to increase, and that without additional revenue the city will be forced to make cuts to essential services.
- **Opponents** argue that the city can do more to reduce expenses and improve efficiency, and that a sales tax increase would harm local retailers.
- **Proponents** also note that if the county of other agency raised sales taxes to the state limit, Pasadena could not generate additional local revenue through a sales tax increase. This creates something of a "use it or lose it" revenue opportunity.
- **Opponents** counter that tax proposals should be evaluated on their own merits rather than by speculating on what may happen, and that future sales tax proposals should be considered if and when they are proposed.
- **Measure J** is a separate advisory measure and has effect only if the sales tax increase passes. It asks whether one-third of the new revenue should be directed to support Pasadena's public schools, with the remaining two-thirds going to the city's general fund. This measure would provide non-binding direction to the city regarding allocation of new revenue.

WPRA urges voters to seek additional information, including more specific arguments for and against the measures, which can be found in local news and through local organizations, at [cityofpasadena.net](http://cityofpasadena.net), and in the usual ballot pamphlet mailed to all voters.

*For information on registering, please visit [sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration](http://sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration).*

## Update: Desiderio Park restroom project marches on

Following a two-hour deliberation on Monday, September 16, City Council disregarded multiple residents' requests to reconsider safety, restroom and park design issues for the new Desiderio Park.

Council defeated a motion, in a 4-4 vote, made by District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison to reopen the topic.

Councilmembers Madison, Gordo, Wilson and Masuda supported the motion, agreeing that further discussion would be beneficial. Councilmembers McAustin, Kennedy and Hampton as well as Mayor Tornek opposed further discussion and favored proceeding with current plans. As a result, the city will continue with the project, in spite of clear and vociferous objections by residents, neighbors, and others.

Mayor Tornek, quoted by Pasadena Now,

said: "This park has evolved through thoughtful discussions. There have been four commission approvals and countless discussions. The notion that we have somehow lost the spirit of this park is not accurate."

Several speakers, who were concerned about bridge suicides and opposed to the restroom construction, expressed dismay that they had not been heard by Council.



# More fencing is going up on the Colorado Street Bridge

BY SUE MOSSMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
PASADENA HERITAGE

**S**adly, the iconic Colorado Street Bridge continues to attract individuals who are determined to commit suicide by jumping from it. The city will install additional chain-link fencing — at a cost of nearly \$300,000 — along the entire length of the bridge to discourage jumpers. The unsightly fencing is intended to be temporary, until a permanent solution is designed. As this fencing goes up, the city is requesting proposals from engineering design firms for a permanent fence design.

## Anti-mansionization plans shift gears

Hearing city residents' concerns, the Planning Department is working on the last phase of a three-part process to better direct the development of single-family homes. Staff drafted new standards for new homes and major additions that are not in Landmark Districts or subject to the Hillside Ordinance or special Hastings Ranch guidelines. Pasadena Heritage offered many comments in the process and found the second draft of the new regulations and guidelines to be good, overall, as did the Design Commission. However, the Planning Commission reversed course on many of the concepts and requested staff to substantially revise the plan. It is possible that a set of zoning changes and building code revisions can address many of the issues identified with over-scaled and incompatible new construction, but the commission also resisted much of a new review process and

specific design guidelines. Pasadena Heritage was very disappointed in this reversal, and we are awaiting the revised proposal to see if we think it can accomplish the goals of keeping neighborhood character intact while allowing for new construction and remodeling.

## Former YWCA needs action now

Situated across from City Hall, the former YWCA has been sitting vacant for more than 15 years and is in urgent need of shoring and mothballing while decisions about its future



enough, in our view. The roof needs to be adequately tarped before the rain returns, and structural damage needs to be addressed before it worsens. The more the building suffers, the more expensive it will be to rehabilitate it for a new use. City Council has yet to schedule further discussion of the site's future. In the meantime, the Public Works



On a recent tour of the building with Public Works staff, Pasadena Heritage representatives noticed first-hand how the former YWCA building is quickly deteriorating.

drag on. On a recent tour of the building with Public Works staff, Pasadena Heritage representatives saw that the building is continually deteriorating. Water damage is a serious issue in some places, and vandalism and vagrant infiltration are causing continual problems and increased risk. The city plans to fence at least the north and east sides of the building, and that can't happen soon

Department plans to conduct a building conditions assessment, hopefully in the very near future!

## Craftsman Weekend offers many choices!

Pasadena Heritage will host its 27th annual Craftsman Weekend November 9-11. The schedule this year includes the signature Sunday House tour but also a variety of walking tours, bus tours, lectures, and evening events in historic sites. One theme being explored is the Asian influence on the Craftsman Movement in Pasadena. A full schedule of events is available on the website, and tickets for all activities can be purchased starting September 20.

## Thanks to all who supported Bridge Party!

Pasadena Heritage's community event and fundraiser on the historic Colorado Street Bridge was a huge success. The nearly 5,000 attendees enjoyed live music, dancing, food and drinks, children's activities, vintage cars and more. Big hits this year included some new music, new food selections and the rock wall in the children's area. Funds raised exceeded our goal, and we are grateful to all who supported our big biennial event!



Pasadena Heritage will host its 27th annual Craftsman Weekend November 9-11.

# WPRA urges tighter mansionization rules

## Opinion

BY MIC HANSEN  
CHAIR, LAND USE AND PLANNING

For a number of years now, our community has seen the construction of new homes and remodels that are out of scale and out of character with their single-family neighborhoods. This practice of oversizing and over-styling homes, vis a vis their surroundings, has come to be known as “mansionization.”

In the fall of 2014, City Council asked that this issue be studied and solutions brought forth to discourage this practice. The work was divided into three phases, two of which have been completed to date: Lower Hastings Ranch area and hillside overlay districts now have more stringent regulations to protect neighborhood character. Additionally, existing landmark districts also have protection with historic preservation zoning overlays.

This has left the remaining single-family neighborhoods throughout the city — largely non-hillside and non-landmarked areas — with fewer restrictions, which present the potential for the proliferation of out-of-scale and out-of-character structures in conflict with their surroundings. Charles, Prince of Wales, characterized them as “carbuncles.”

There is a lot to be said for protecting the integrity of established, coherent, congenial neighborhoods. Loss of light, privacy, character and context are very real and justifiable concerns for neighbors faced with the prospect of a behemoth next door or behind them.

Over the last year, the city’s planning staff has been conducting public workshops and working with John Kaliski Architects, developing new guidelines for single-family residences.

A revised version of the guidelines was circulated in July. This iteration responded to public concerns with more explicit text, and included illustrations and examples to help guide the process. Although city staff and the Design Commission



supported the new guidelines, the Planning Commission disagreed and diminished many of the suggested safeguards. The WPRA is disappointed by this direction and urges reconsideration.

The WPRA supports the recommendations and guidelines accepted by staff and the Design Commission for the addition of a zoning code amendment that would require new single-family construction as well as major additions and remodels to be subject to discretionary design review. The new code must also consider and include accessory structures.

As specified in the recommendations, an additional hearing officer with extensive experience in residential architecture and design would need to be added to the hearing officer cadre for the implementation of the new code. WPRA would also urge systematic inspections and enforcement of projects in process to ensure that the codes are dispassionately and uniformly enforced. Historically, this has not always been the case.

With the new Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance now approved, as well as the desire by some homeowners to construct or enlarge pool houses, recreation rooms, art studios, garages, etc., healthy vegetation and mature trees are being removed to make room. Our city already has lost a significant number of trees due to construction, draught, intense heat and pests.

Are we comfortable that our insatiable need to have bigger and bigger houses and more ancillary structures is worth sacrificing many mature trees? How and when will we know when the destruction of Pasadena’s urban forest has proceeded too far?

Further, an issue that currently is not addressed and deserves critical review is the effect of construction on neighbors. Some neighbors have suffered — sometimes as long as several years — with construction noise, dust and dirt, traffic and marked encroachment upon their ability to enjoy their property and daily lives. We know of examples where hapless neighbors have had construction activity simultaneously next door, behind them and across the street. In one instance, this was ongoing for almost four years! The new ordinance would do well to find the means to mitigate construction impacts generated by multiple concurrent projects adjacent to any given property.

No homeowner should be obliged to endure for a prolonged time an untenable situation that disrupts their lives and interferes with their ability to live in comfort in their home. One neighbor was unable to use their pool for the entirety of a summer due to noise and dust resulting from adjacent construction. Another neighbor had to contend with the construction of a behemoth looming over their back yard, dwarfing their modest bungalow, diminishing their sunlight as well as the use of their back yard. Yet another neighbor was subjected to ground vibration, dust and intense noise from the construction of a huge barn-like accessory structure with a metal roof reflecting heat onto their back yard, which on completion almost entirely obscured views. Multiple other examples can be cited.

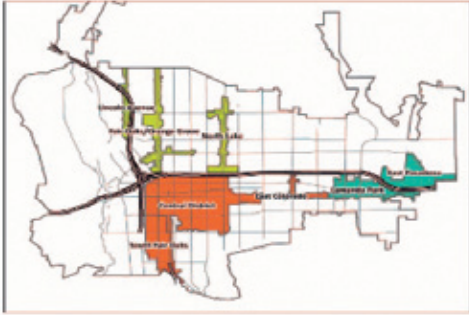
The WPRA urges the city to consider adding protections from construction activity for existing neighbors and limiting the number of projects concurrently underway within a 500 feet radius of any single-family residence.

We realize that the desire for these bigger homes is in large part due to the evolution of lifestyles and social trends. But these changes should not obviate the need to adhere to standards and to safeguard and respect the rights of those in established residential neighborhoods that have been the hallmark of Pasadena in character and beauty. These neighborhoods are precious, and once defaced and gone, cannot be recovered.



# On the WPRA land-use watch list

By MIC HANSEN  
CHAIR, LAND USE/PLANNING



## Update of all eight specific plans

The city's Planning Department, with the collaboration of the community and consultants, is revising and updating the eight specific plans to conform with the General Plan adopted in 2015. Eight community workshops are now completed. Attendance at a "pop-up" event in early September at Pasadena City College was poor, due to the short notice. Read more: <https://goo.gl/hEEq3M>



## Art Center College of Design digital billboard

The WPRA and other neighborhood organizations have strenuously objected to altering the city's sign ordinance to allow a 40-foot high, 120-foot-wide five-story wrap-around digital display on the building at the corner of Arroyo Parkway and Glenarm Street. City staff introduced an amendment that would change Pasadena's current zoning code — which currently prohibits any oversized electronic signs — to permit these building-size electronic signs. Council referred the request to the Planning Commission.



## Civic Center

The Civic Center task force has concluded its deliberations and issued its recommendations, which City Council heard in June. City staff has indicated it will circulate a request for proposals to complete the study. We continue to wait for the topic to be scheduled again for City council and for Council's direction. Read more: <https://goo.gl/c22h1y>



## Mansionization

For the last phase of this initiative, which deals with oversized or out-of-context residential development in non-hillside and non-landmarked areas, the city Planning Department has revised new guidelines, which were heard in mid-July by the Design Commission. Read more: <https://goo.gl/PZZ8ce>



## Reducing allowable building capacity

In response to a spate of new state regulations and mandates, a new interim ordinance is being proposed to limit the height of new construction to conform with the heights of the block face. Council in June could not reach a consensus and directed staff to investigate this complex issue further and provide new recommendations.



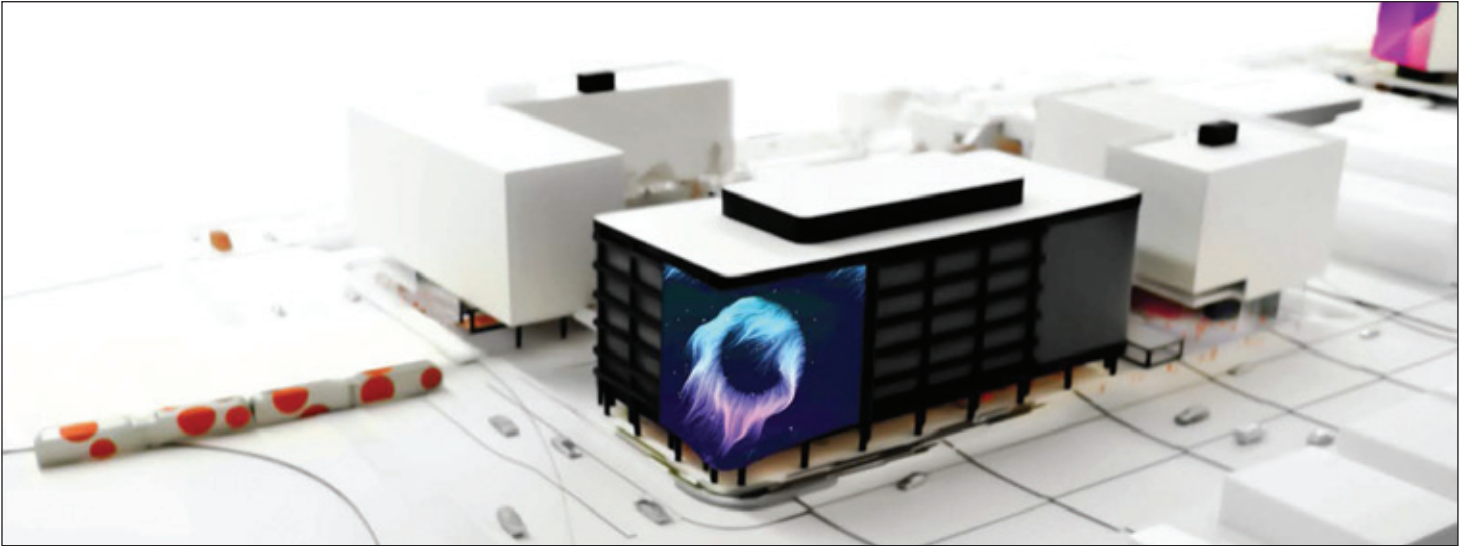
## Desiderio Park public restroom

The construction of public toilets in this park continues to be of great concern to the neighborhood. The design has been modified to reflect a more "arts and crafts" sensibility, and the structure has been moved farther to the interior of the park, closer to the Arroyo Bungalows and Habitat homes. The issue was heard by City Council in early June and also in late August. Council rejected, by 4-4 vote, a motion from District 6 Councilmember Steve Madison to reopen the issue for further discussion. As a result, the project, over strenuous resident objections, will move ahead with the current design. Read more: <https://goo.gl/QwGYJu>



## Arroyo Advisory Group and One Arroyo initiative

The Arroyo Advisory Group — convened by City Council and the City Manager to devise strategies to unify, preserve and protect the Arroyo, and generate guidelines for its responsible use and financial future — has completed its work. In August, Council endorsed the Arroyo Advisory Group's final report and agreed in principle on the formation of the "One Arroyo" Foundation, a 501(c)(3) entity, to raise funds for pilot projects and other Arroyo improvements. Initially, the non-profit organization will raise funds to implement the two approved trail pilot projects.



An artist's rendering of what the ArtCenter's proposed external, jumbotron screen might look like on one of its Arroyo Parkway buildings.

## WPRA opposes zoning change for AC's external jumbotron

### Opinion

BY AVRAM GOLD  
VICE PRESIDENT, WPRA

**T**he task force conducted two public hearings. The ArtCenter College of Design is pressing City Council, various commissions and city planning staff to change city signage rules to permit wrapping the corner of its 1111 S. Arroyo Parkway building with a 40-foot high, 120-foot wide media mesh. The stated objective was to advertise student art, designs and perhaps commercial product designs. While the creative projects of ArtCenter's students deserve public expression, there must be alternatives for that exposure that do not require a jumbotron greeting all those who enter Pasadena's south gateway at Glenarm Street, at the termination of the Pasadena 110 Freeway.

This massive digital display, as proposed, will adversely affect public safety and is aesthetically out of character with our community and its long-established values of history and sense of place. But more importantly, if ArtCenter convinces the city to conform to its rebranding agenda by altering signage regulations, the proposed video display would serve as a precedent to break down the carefully configured sign ordinances for the rest of Pasadena.

We can't emphasize enough how much a five-story, illuminated display of changing

pictures would negatively impact Pasadena's character and historic traditions. And yet, after repeated community objections voicing serious concerns, ArtCenter continues to insist that the city freshen its identity and heritage to conform to the ArtCenter's expanded marketing intentions.

We have no issues with ArtCenter's interest in pursuing a worldwide presence. In fact, we acknowledge that ArtCenter deserves this recognition. But ArtCenter's pressure to achieve its goal in this way is simply not appropriate or warranted. We must ask why this high-tech, Times Square-like advertising mode is so important to ArtCenter? Spokespersons say it is solely to celebrate its students' achievements. We have no objection to that, and in fact, we encourage the school to showcase student work facing Raymond Avenue, but within ArtCenter's proposed open-space central front court.

Aside from the digital display's conflicts with city aesthetics and compatibility, we also believe drivers going east or west on Glenarm Street and north or south on Arroyo Parkway may be distracted by the size, lighting and movement of the sign's content. This would risk causing accidents at one of Pasadena's busiest intersections. The lighted and animated sign would be almost impossible for drivers to ignore as they exit or enter the 110 freeway or proceed across the Gold Line grade-level crossing on East Glenarm.

Accordingly, the WPRA ardently opposes changing the signage codes to accommodate

ArtCenter's advertising objectives. We assert that this, or any other video sign for our streets, should remain prohibited.

### 710 tunnel opponents

*Continued from page 1*

The letter urged Caltrans not to certify the tunnel analyses in the Final EIR/EIS and to strike out all relevant tunnel sections of the document, "which we find to be deficient and inadequate." These sections are not required for certification and execution of the TSM/TDM alternative. In addition, the letter requested that Caltrans remove encumbrances (subsurface rights) that would delay the sale of Caltrans-owned properties.

The letter clearly states that if these conditions are not met, stakeholders may be compelled to take legal action. This would be a lengthy and costly process for all parties. The National Trust for Historic Preservation sent a similar letter to Caltrans in alliance with our position.

The WPRA is still hopeful that Caltrans will wisely avoid litigation by not certifying the tunnel sections of the Final EIR/EIS. Corridor traffic improvements can be made, and the freeway 'stubs' can be returned to useful purposes in Pasadena and Alhambra.

There's still an opportunity for everyone to win.

# A thank-you to our donor-members!

The WPRA appreciates the financial support of all those who join our organization or contribute to our efforts. The membership donations listed below include the names of all those who've contributed \$100 or more over the 12-month period ending July 31, 2018. If your name is not listed or is incorrectly listed, please contact me. As always, thank you for your generous support.

Linda Zinn, Membership chair, [membership@wpra.net](mailto:membership@wpra.net)

To make it easier to help fund WPRA services and initiatives, we have enclosed an envelope within this issue. Just insert (1) the completed form on the envelope flap and (2) a check (made out to WPRA) into the pre-addressed envelope, add a stamp and mail it. You may also donate using your credit card by visiting [wpra.net](http://wpra.net) and clicking on EZ Donate in the upper left corner of our home page. The West Pasadena Residents' Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation. Memberships and donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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## BRIEFS

## ULI study: More ideas about managing the arroyo

**T**alk about addressing the challenges of the Arroyo is not new. In fact, the Urban Land Institute in 2012 published the results of a study, “Strategies for an Iconic Landmark and Its Surrounding Area,” which focused on renovations to the Rose Bowl Stadium® and the myriad issues surrounding the uses of the central Arroyo Seco. The City of Pasadena had prepared a series of questions that formed the scope of work and had sent briefing materials for the panelists.

In summary, the panel expressed its belief that the city should allocate resources in a more efficient and thoughtful manner and better manage the entire central Arroyo Seco by coordinating activities and pooling financial resources to improve the overall user experience.

To accomplish these tasks, the panel recommended that the city immediately:

1. Create a central Arroyo conservancy
2. Create and manage a Rose Bowl visitors program built on existing and potential visitor flows
3. Develop a fee-based parking program for the central Arroyo.

In addition to these three immediate actions, the city and conservancy should plan and implement a series of near and longer-term Arroyo-wide improvements, including:

- Redeveloping the clubhouse so that it serves a broader range of visitors
- Reimagining and reorganizing the golf course, including xeriscaping, raising greens fees, and coordinating with other users in the Arroyo
- Reorganizing the parking and playfields
- Naturalizing the arroyo stream

## Pasadena needs to rethink its priorities for the Arroyo

BY BILL CHRISTIAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

**M**ore than 15 separate and distinct entities use the Arroyo Seco, from the largest and most prominent — the Rose Bowl Stadium — to small groups, whose use is occasional and temporary. Many groups have putatively dedicated spaces and a long-established presence.

Some, like the Rose Bowl, are Pasadena icons, clearly deserving of community support as an integral part of city life. Other groups continue to use the Arroyo, maintaining their established presence, for a variety of purposes.

A significant part of the problem is that uses of the Arroyo have been commissioned by different city agencies with little oversight, City Council review or control. Many contracts, where they exist, are outdated; fees are often comparatively minimal or lack justification; and periodic contract and license renewals are issued without revision to reflect changed circumstances.

It's high time that we resolve two key issues.

- First, as Mayor Tornek outlined in the charter for the Arroyo Advisory Group

(AAG), governance of the Arroyo needs to be examined and reordered to provide an integrated structure for the arroyo and its many users. The AAG did not fulfill this promise. Council needs to either charter a separate blue-ribbon commission to do this or reactivate the responsible AAG subcommittee to deliver on this piece of its intended mission.

- Second, the arroyo is not simply a recreational playground. It is also an important natural area, a stream course connecting irreplaceable habitat for animals and plants, whose functional values have been seriously neglected over the past decades. Natural values need to be given much improved consideration and dedicated resources, particularly to restore and enhance the arroyo's wild spaces. This will require a new operating vision in accord with prior arroyo planning that the AAG did not appropriately consider in its final report.

Conceptually, raising and spending many millions of dollars on a new trail system and new amenities, as recommended by the AAG may not be more important when so much work restoring the Arroyo's habitat is needed.



A rope-climbing course installed by the Tom Sawyer Camp in the Arroyo. (Photo by Bill Christian)



# Consequences and strategies

## *Extraordinary heat wave damages plants in the San Gabriel Valley*

BY REBECCA LATTA

ARBORICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL, AND  
WATER MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

**C**limate change presents significant challenges to the future of our urban landscape. As our once mild Mediterranean climate heats up, we need to choose species that can adapt.

Climate change is promoting heat events and drought conditions here and around the world. More extreme weather events of this nature are expected, and we need to adopt proactive strategies and protect plants from damage.

The worst plant-damaging high heat event I've seen in my career happened in early July of this year, affecting plants throughout the Southern California region. Residents may not be aware of the extent of the damage from the heat event this summer. Record high temperatures were recorded, and it did not cool off at night. Thousands of camellias were scorched in the heat at Descanso Gardens. Trees already damaged by invasive shot hole borers and disease were unable to keep leaves hydrated.



California live oak leaf scorched on July 6, 2018

Excessive heat and sunlight can speed up disease issues. Plants near paving, decomposed granite, artificial turf or sunny walls with a southern or eastern exposure can be scorched or burned. When air temperatures are high, soil temperatures increase, seedlings and roots can be damaged.

Cool and moisture-loving redwood, Japanese maple birch, magnolia, Victorian box, camellia, and Australian brush cherry, which have damage and dieback from extreme heat events, should be phased out and replanted with more tolerant species from Southern California, Baja California, the Mediterranean, South America, Australia and the Sonoran Desert.



Camellia scorched in heat wave

### **Implement cooling strategies during the event**

Provide shade. During the heat event, use shade cloth, cardboard and patio umbrellas to protect plants from heat. Keep plants well hydrated prior to extreme heat events. Wrap burlap on exposed trunks, or use a leaf spray, whitewash or latex paint on trunks for sunburn protection. Shade can also be sprayed on plants and trees in the form of a clay product called Kaolin to provide sunburn protection by reflecting sunlight, much as we use zinc oxide on our skin.



Kaolin on the leaves of my blood orange tree

### **Water strategically and monitor moisture**

Let the soil moisture and weather dictate the watering schedule and depth. Water by hand and use soaker hoses. Soak plants to 1-2 feet

deep allowing the top one or two inches to dry out before watering again. Make sure water is reaching the entire root zone, which often extends beyond the edge of the leaves (drip-line) of plants. Check moisture with an inexpensive moisture meter, a small shovel or a long screwdriver.

Timing of watering is important. When the weather is very humid, avoid watering at night to reduce opportunistic rot diseases. To avoid leaf burn, avoid wetting leaves in the hot part of the day. Early morning is the best time to water.

Reduce watering when it starts to cool off. If you don't, you'll risk drowning roots and promoting rot diseases. Remember that if damage occurs to the plant from heat, the root structure absorbs less water, and fewer leaves means reduced transpiration.

### **Mulching, blowing and pruning**

Mulching is the best way to protect soil and plant roots from heat. It's also a key to conserving water. Mulch holds moisture, encourages soil microbial activity, suppresses weeds and improves soil structure.

Avoid heavy pruning and hedging in the summer. This will cause the plant to push new growth that is easily damaged in heat events. Instead, prune a little at a time or wait to prune until it has cooled off. Avoid overthinning oaks and other evergreen trees, because their bark will burn in these heat events.

As you phase out heat-and drought-sensitive plants and plant new trees and shrubs that can tolerate drier and hotter environments, be sure to chip the plants you remove, and spread them on-site as valuable mulch. Your old plants can help protect your new plants and provide food for their growth.

*Rebecca Latta has provided arboricultural, horticultural, and water management consultation services in the greater Los Angeles area for over 25 years, serving estates, residences, parks and public gardens, cities, and utilities, offering comprehensive strategies to manage landscape spaces guided by the complex interactions between plants, soil, and the surrounding ecosystem. Contact Rebecca at [rlattaconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:rlattaconsulting@gmail.com).*



# Rose Bowl sitrep: Sheeran concert gridlock

BY BILL URBAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

**M**any local residents and fans of musician Ed Sheeran were dismayed to find themselves stuck in virtual gridlock for miles around the Rose Bowl in the hours before the concert on Saturday evening, August 18.

## Why it happened.

- Pasadena Police are not entirely sure why traffic for this event was so much worse than usual for events of this size, but offer several theories:
- Car navigation apps, like Waze and Google, directed people to only two of the many access routes to the stadium. When those became congested, the apps directed people to side streets and to streets designated for specific parking lots. The last item, if correct, accounts for fans driving toward the wrong gates for their parking passes, then arguing with traffic control before turning around and trying to get back in the flow.
- The intense traffic jam exacerbated the usual challenges with ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft. Also, an unusually

large portion of people used these services, which meant more duplicate round trips to the Rose Bowl, once to drop the people off and again to pick them up.

- It was a hot day, so fewer people arrived early. Although the concert started with opening acts at 7 p.m., concert goers know that the main act generally doesn't start until a couple of hours later, so an unusual number of people timed their arrival for 9 p.m.
- Pasadena Police are taking a number of steps to improve traffic management for future events, including:
- Continuing to work with car navigation app vendors, including Waze and Google. Although there are limits to what the vendors are willing to do, Rose Bowl provides information about barricaded streets and specific parking lots so people can enter the parking lot on their ticket into the app and the app will provide tailored directions.
- Establishing more consistent use of parking lots from event to event. As much as possible, the same lots will be used for general, preferred and other specialized parking.

## What you can do.

- Report emergencies by calling 9-1-1.
- Report problems and issues on event days by calling the Rose Bowl Event Hotline (626) 397-4141. The hotline logs all calls and coordinates among stadium management, city services, traffic, police and fire.
- Get information on the Rose Bowl's web page, especially the community page; [RoseBowlStadium.com/community](http://RoseBowlStadium.com/community).
- Watch for event announcements in WPRA's Update email. To add yourself to the distribution list, go to [WPRA.net](http://WPRA.net) and click on the Update and Newsletter tab.
- Write to Meredith Thomas at [MThomas@RoseBowlStadium.com](mailto:MThomas@RoseBowlStadium.com) and ask to be added to the Rose Bowl's neighborhood status email.
- Get information through Twitter by following any or all of these accounts:
  - @PasadenaPD for Pasadena Police Department
  - @RoseBowlStadium for Rose Bowl update
  - @LtMarkGoodman for event traffic updates during major events. Lt. Mark Goodman is the Traffic Section supervisor

# Major infrastructure projects planned for the upper Arroyo Seco

BY BILL URBAN  
DIRECTOR, WPRA

**P**asadena is gearing up to start a flurry of significant projects in the upper Arroyo Seco, including LA County's controversial sediment removal, a continuing NASA project to mitigate groundwater contamination, and Pasadena Water and Power projects to upgrade its water infrastructure.

LA County is ready to start its massive project to remove sediment from above Devil's Gate Dam. Construction of an off-ramp from Woodbury Road into the dam and removal of vegetation will begin this December. Actual sediment removal will begin in April 2019 and last up to four years.

NASA is funding an enhanced contamination containment well, which is

expected to step up removal of Perchlorate and volatile organic compounds by 40%. The water it removes will be treated at Monk Hill Facility just outside the arroyo. The project is currently in environmental review with public review scheduled for January 2019. Construction is planned to start in summer 2019 and be completed in spring 2020.

Pasadena Water and Power also has several projects:

- Constructing a water booster station and adding three new 1,000-gallon-per-minute pumps. Construction is scheduled from February to August 2019.
- Constructing a new 12-inch pipeline between Devil's Gate Dam and Johnson Field. The pipeline will supply water to the new booster pumps and help support fire protection. Construction is scheduled from August 2018 through January 2019

- Proposing a multi-part infrastructure upgrade called the Arroyo Seco Canyon Project. The project will include repairing, replacing and enhancing PWP's water supply facilities in the upper arroyo and repairing two bridges. PWP expects to start the environmental impact study in 2019, complete design in 2020 and construct the upgrades from spring 2021 to spring/summer 2022.
- Constructing a pump-back pipeline and pump to reclaim about 1,000 of about 8,900 acre-feet of water that flows through Devil's Gate dam annually. PWP is currently discussing the project with LA County. Construction would be started after the sediment removal project is completed.

# Hot meals program is back after renovation hiatus

After a five-month hiatus, the Pasadena hot meal program reopened its doors again on May 30 and celebrated its grand reopening on June 27. The break in service was due to a major renovation and remodeling of the Jackie Robinson Community Center, 1020 N. Fair Oaks Ave.

The privately funded program serves up tasty hot dinners with a smile on Wednesday nights to the homeless and needy in northwest Pasadena.

Founded by Robin Salzer, owner of Robin's Wood Fire BBQ and Grill in east Pasadena, and the late Walter Jackson, another Pasadena businessman, the program has provided more than 126,000 free meals for low-income and homeless residents since its inception in 2010. Jackson passed away in 2016, but Salzer has continued their joint mission.

The program evolved from a simple vision to help neighbors in need into a weekly event that served balanced meals to 100 to 200 hungry people at the Jackie Robinson Center.

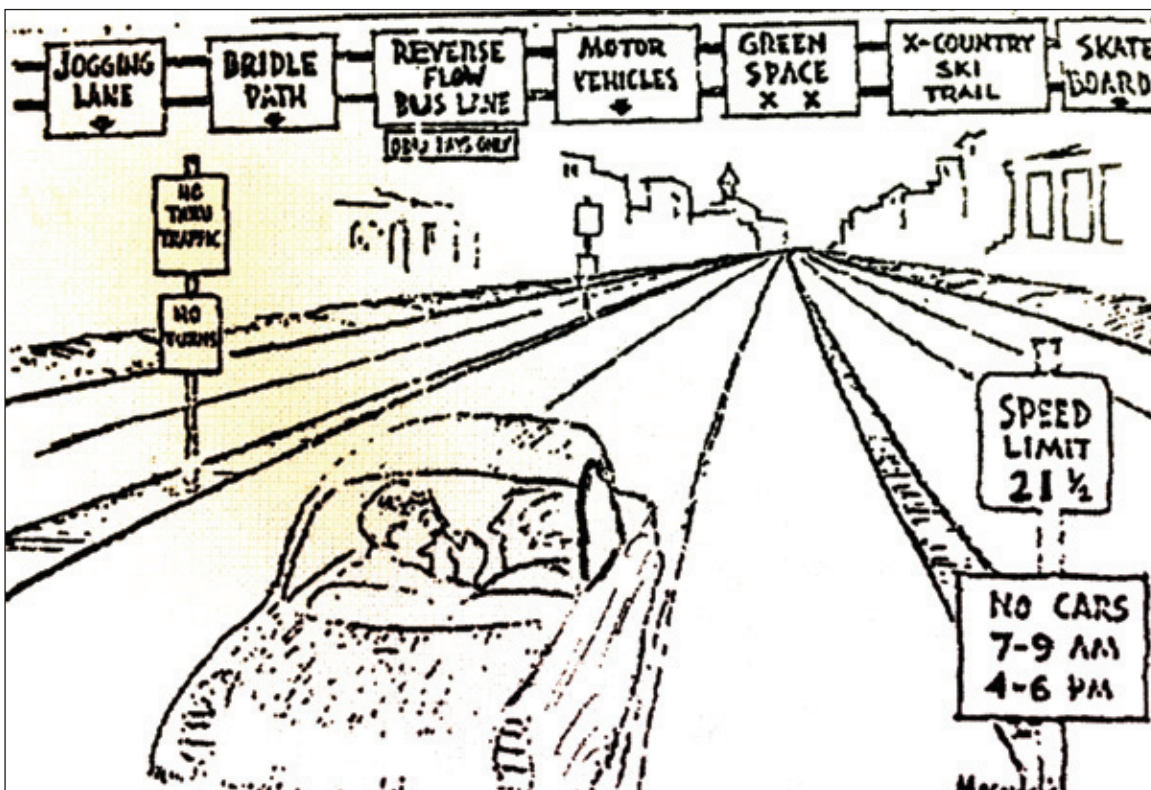
"One night of hot meals isn't enough to stem the tide of hunger, but it helps," Robin Salzer says.



Robin Salzer, founder of the Pasadena hot meals program, celebrates the program's reopening with now-retired Pasadena Human Services and Recreation Director Horace Wormely.

Robin and his merry band of servers are always glad for help on the grill or the serving line, or simply spreading fellowship and friendship.

"I personally believe this is true meaning of the 'Pasadena Way,' Salzer said. "It's my opinion that we all have a moral and ethical responsibility to make Pasadena the best city that it can be." Source: *Pasadena Now*



"Well, City Council finally worked out a Complete Streets compromise for South Orange Grove Boulevard." [Apologies to the unidentified cartoon artist who conceived this tongue-in-cheek response to an earlier concept much like today's Complete Streets. And thanks to Dan Beal for cutting the cartoon out of a long-forgotten magazine and sharing it with us.]



# The controversial 710 Freeway in Pasadena: 54 years ago

BY KIRK MYERS  
ASSISTANT ARCHIVIST  
PASADENA MUSEUM OF HISTORY

Controversy over the 710 Freeway in Pasadena has a long history. In 1964, the *Pasadena Star-News* carried many stories about public hearings on the three proposed routes at that time. The “Blue Route” would have taken out the Arroyo Seco. The “Red Route” would have been parallel to Pasadena Avenue, while the “Green Route” would have been parallel to Fair Oaks.

Pasadena’s City Directors [now city councilmembers], as well as a large majority of local residents, reluctantly supported the Green Route. The other two routes were fiercely opposed.

“Nearly 500 Pasadena residents packed the Garfield School auditorium Thursday night to support the Fair Oaks (green) route for the North-South (Long Beach) Freeway extension .... They were vehement in their opposition to two proposed freeway routes that would run either through the Arroyo Seco or just west of Pasadena Avenue.” (*Pasadena Star-News*, April 17, 1964)

On Sunday, May 3, a rally was held in Singer Park to support the Green Route. “Persons who attend the rally are invited to bring picnic lunches and gather on the lawn of the historic park at the corner of California Boulevard and John Avenue (sic), which would be eliminated if the Red Route is adopted.” (*Pasadena Star-News*, April 30, 1964)

In the fall of 1963, Ambassador College officials were informed that initial engineering surveys considered a route for the freeway just east of Terrace Drive, one block from South Orange Grove Boulevard. This would have prevented the construction of proposed college buildings east of Terrace Drive. It also would have taken out Gordon Terrace and Singer Park further south, greatly altering the character of west Pasadena.

To persuade the California Highway Commission to route the freeway one block east, on the other side of the Union Pacific railroad tracks, ground was broken for a gymnasium/natatorium complex in February, and construction was completed by November, 1964.



The Ambassador College campus circa 1970, looking south. The Hall of Administration, Student Center and Gymnasium on the left side of the photo were built to thwart the intention to shift the route for the 710 freeway to east of the Union Pacific tracks, which are visible at the extreme left of the photo.

The proposed route through the Arroyo Seco was strongly contested. “The Blue Route would destroy for all time the one outstanding natural feature of our city and the surrounding area.’ This was the statement of the Pasadena Citizens Freeway Committee in urging the State Highway Department to consider only the Green Route, aligning with Fair Oaks Avenue, if a north-south freeway must be constructed in Pasadena.” (*Pasadena Star-News*, July 21, 1964).

“Mrs. Morris of the Highland Park group called the Arroyo Seco a ‘way of life’ and said if it was destroyed by the ‘cement monster’ it could not ‘as in the case of Humpty Dumpty be put back together again.’” (*Pasadena Star-News*, May 8, 1964)

The struggle continued for months. Then, on November 18, 1964, “The California Highway Commission today adopted by a 4-to-1 vote routes for the North-South (Long Beach) and the East-West (Foothill) Freeways. A Meridian Avenue – Pasadena Avenue route for the North-South Freeway was approved. The route had been recommended by State Highway Engineer J.C. Womack and opposed violently by South Pasadena and Pasadena.” (*Pasadena Star-News*, November 18, 1964).

But the controversy was only beginning. The next day, the *Star-News* reported “Pasadena Mayor Floyd Gwinn told the *Star-News* today that he was ‘very unhappy’ about the Pasadena Avenue route, and said it wasn’t the





The 710 Freeway stub now ends at California Street and is bounded by Pasadena Avenue on the left of the photo. An original route projection just one block east of South Orange Grove would have changed west Pasadena even more dramatically, had any of the original plans been adopted.

best thing for the city.” Supervisor Warren Dorn was more pointed in his comments to the newspaper – “We must call a halt to the federal and state governments usurping local decisions.’ ...He noted that people residing in an area know what is the better solution than do officials in Sacramento.”

Even after half a century, the controversy continues.

*The Pasadena Museum of History is located at the corner of Orange Grove Boulevard and Walnut Street (470 W. Walnut, Pasadena 91103); free parking in the museum lot. The*

*Research Library & Archives are open to the public free of charge Thursdays-Sundays from 1-4 p.m. For additional information, please visit the museum’s website, [Pasadenahistory.org](http://Pasadenahistory.org), or call 626-577-1660, ext. 10.*





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### Los Angeles

LA County Supervisor Kathryn Barger  
(District 5): (213) 974-5555

### California

Governor Jerry Brown  
(916) 445-2841

Senator Anthony Portantino  
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Assemblymember: Chris Holden  
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### United States

President Donald J. Trump  
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Senator Dianne Feinstein  
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Senator Kamala Harris  
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Representative Judy Chu  
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Representative Adam Schiff  
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