

LA's NC's Demand 60-Day Delay on \$4.5 Billion Street Tax Vote

Details Written by Jack Humphreville 15 Jan 2013



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STATUS REPORT - The motion for the \$4.5 billion Los Angeles Emergency Local Street Safety and Traffic Improvement Measure (the "Street Tax") has not been well received since it was quietly filed on Friday afternoon, January 4.

This Measure, if approved by the two-thirds of the voters, would fund the rehabilitation of 31% of our failed and near failed streets over the next ten years. This large scale infrastructure project would be financed by \$3 billion of bonds issued over the next 10 years, and repaid from the proceeds of a property tax that would raise \$4.5 billion over the next 29 years.

The motion called for the placement of the Street Tax on the May 21 ballot. This would require the City Council to finalize this \$4.5 billion Street Tax within four short weeks, by January 31.

On Saturday, January 5, the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition ("LANCC") passed a resolution demanding that the City Council postpone any decision for 60 days so that Neighborhood Councils would have the opportunity to review, analyze, and comment upon the Street Tax.

LANCC's resolution was widely circulated, causing many alert citizens to express their concern about the lack of transparency and the City Council's rush to place this multi-billion tax on the ballot without adequate information or time to make an informed and considered decision.

On Tuesday night, after a presentation by Mitch Englander, the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates passed a resolution demanding that the City Council postpone any decision for 60 days.

At the City Council on Wednesday, after a presentation orchestrated by sponsors Mitch Englander and Joe Buscaino, City Council President Herb Wesson postponed any discussion or consideration for six days, to Tuesday, January 15.

Since that time, at least two Neighborhood Councils, Sunland Tujunga and Greater Wilshire (see below), passed resolutions calling for a postponement of 60 days so that the 95 Neighborhood Councils would have adequate time to review and analyze the City's Fiscal Impact Report.

As of Monday afternoon, the City Council has not posted any information about the Street Tax on the Council File Management System (13-1300-S1), including the Wednesday presentation by Nazario Seuceda, the Director of the Bureau of Street Services, any Fiscal Impact Report, or any implementation plan.

On Tuesday, January 15, the City Council will once again consider the Street Tax in Council Chambers, allowing the City Council only two weeks to place this \$4.5 billion tax on the ballot.

There are numerous questions that need to be answered, including, but not limited to, the fiscal impact on the City, the adequacy of management, the independence of any oversight, the future funding of the Bureau of Street Services, and the diversion of money to the General Fund.

There are also serious concerns that transcend the Street Tax, including the uninformed rush to judgment, the lack of transparency, the failure to consult with the charter authorized Neighborhood Councils, and the failure of the City Council to engage in meaningful budget, pension, and work place reform.

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The following is the Resolution of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council:

The Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council supports the Resolutions of the Neighborhood Council Budget Advocates and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Coalition and urges Tom LaBonge, Paul Koretz, and Herb Wesson and the rest of the City Council to postpone any decision regarding the \$3 Billion Street Repair Bond Measure (Council File 13-1300-S1) for at least 60 days.

This additional time will allow the City to prepare a fiscal impact report, permit the GWNC and other impacted stakeholders to review and analyze the financial consequences of this measure in a reasoned manner, and allow the GWNC and the other 94 certified Neighborhood Councils to hold Brown Act compliant meetings and report back to the Councilmembers with their stakeholders' views.

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Here are selected article regarding the \$4.5 Billion Street Tax:

City Council Declares Open Season on LA Homeowners

January 8, 2013

By Jack Humphreville

LA's \$3 Billion Street Scheme: The Real Story They Don't Want You to Hear

January 11, 2013

By Ron Kaye

Why the Bum's Rush for the \$4.5 Billion Street Tax?

January 11, 2013

By Jack Humphreville

Englander Hits Roadblock in Effort to Repair Crumbling City Streets—NCs Ask for Delay

By Saul Daniels

January 11, 2013

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(Jack Humphreville writes LA Watchdog for CityWatch. He is the President of the DWP Advocacy Committee, the Ratepayer Advocate for the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council, and a Neighborhood Council Budget Advocate. Humphreville is the publisher of the Recycler Classifieds -- www.recycler.com. He can be reached at: lajack@gmail.com)

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