

 **Valley VOTE****Meeting Report for February 21, 2011**
by Joe Vitti

Valley VOTE Board members, community leaders, and concerned citizens convened on February 21, 2011 at Galpin Ford to hear from our featured speaker **Valley Deputy Chief Kirk J. Albanese** and also from our **Valley VOTE Committee Chairs**.

Kirk J. Albanese



Kirk J. Albanese is a Deputy Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department and is the leader of Operations for the San Fernando Valley Bureau. He started his police academy training in November of 1980 and has steadily moved up through the ranks of the L.A.P.D. including the positions of sergeant, lieutenant, captain, and commander. He was promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief by Police Chief William J. Bratton in March 29, 2009 and to his present position by Police Chief Charles Beck.

Chief Albanese provided a great deal of information regarding statistics on numerous crime factors over the past decades. They indicate the city is a lot safer today. He stated that over the last ten years we have reduced city wide Part 1 crime from 200,000 in 2000 to 109,000 last year. That number has dropped continually each and every year. Homicides, last year, city wide were at 297 and are at their lowest level since 1967. (65 in the Valley). Part 1 Crimes include the following: Homicides; Rape; Robbery; Aggravated Assault; Burglary; Burglary theft from a vehicle; Grand theft auto; Personal theft other. The statistics for these crimes are also reported by the LAPD to the Department of Justice and the FBI.

"If people feel the city is safe they will come and stay for a visit"

The Chief went on to explain that since the city is much safer, more and more visitors are coming to L.A. The recent NBA All Star weekend held downtown at Staples Center was responsible for visitors spending an estimated \$85 million dollars on all sort of activities in the city. The expenditure of these funds do provide financial help to L.A. in these tough economic times. The Deputy Chief went on to point out what he heard from the Mayor a few weeks ago regarding the Hollywood area. Twenty years ago the average visitor to the tourist sights spent about **22 minutes visiting** while today the visitors are spending an average of **2 days**.

"The San Fernando Valley Bureau of the Police department is the largest in the city."

The district covers 220 square miles and has a population of 1.7 million people. There are 2400 police officers and detectives that are assigned to the Valley Bureau. 9 out of 10 crimes in the Valley are property crimes; somebody is broken into your home; stolen your car; took something out of your car; or out of your garage. The police follow these statistics very closely and try to identify trends or patterns. To catch the thieves involved with auto crimes the police in the Valley deploy a **"Bait Car"** at night. By smartly planning the location of this vehicle the Valley police have been arresting an individual just about every night breaking the law. They have worked with the courts and their actions are legal. **"Bait Cars"** have also been used to catch crooks that are stealing cars. They leave the car unoccupied, strategically placed, with the motor running and if the thief takes the bait, they are on there way to jail with a felony charge.

"We cannot lose the edge that the department has and has worked so hard to achieve to this point."

Chief Albanese discussed the issue of the Budget for the Police department. The Police department starts classes for new recruits to offset the attrition that the department faces continually to maintain the strength of

the department. The number of police officers is 9963. He stated "We cannot lose the edge that the department has and has worked so hard to achieve to this point." In the early 90's there were 1100 homicides compared to last year's 297. There were 70,000 cars stolen in the early 90's compared to the 16,000 last year. The department has made great strides and the city cannot afford to take a backward step. The chief also pointed out Gang injunctions and intervention programs and community policing groups have also helped significantly in reducing crime in the city.

The Valley VOTE members enthusiastically applauded Chief Albanese remarks and thanked him for his very informative presentation.

Valley VOTE Committee Reports

Community Redevelopment Agency - Vic Viereck

Vic Viereck reported on the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) controversy. He explained how CRA revenue is created, what is required of it, and some substantial obligations the Los Angeles CRA has created. The affordable housing requirement, through tax exemptions for nonprofit affordable housing operators, erodes the tax base. The requirement issue bonds, in order to receive the tax increment revenue, generates substantial debt that has to be repaid out of CRA revenue. Principal and interest required to be paid through June 30, 2041 (yes, 2041) is \$1,290,512,000. Operations have also generated unfunded pension liability of \$23,444,000. If the CRA project areas are eliminated, how are all the CRA obligations to be paid?

Los Angeles Airports - Denny Schneider

The numbers have been crunched again and LAX is gaining market share. While other airports are losing passenger or staying flat LAX has increased back to almost 60 Million Annual Passengers. Is this good or bad? It depends on your perspective. If you make your money at LAX it's good. If you are an airline that is able to consolidate administrative costs it's good. If you are a traveler who has to drive a long distance to LAX it's bad. If you live on the Westside it's also bad because you get increased traffic on the already congested 405 freeway. Regionalization is possible, but it must be cultivated. SCAG, Southern California Association of Governments is working on an update to their Regional Transportation Plan. Follow their activities and tell them we need regionalization to ensure that there is a backup plan in case there are problems at LAX. Airports are important to our economy.

Community Care Facility Ordinance - Maria Fisk

Maria Fisk of the Granada Hills Residents Group narrated a slide presentation showing the horrible conditions that exist in a number of homes that have been established in several communities in the city to care for nonmedical residential care individuals. Greig Smith introduced a motion about 2 years ago for the city to prepare an ordinance to deal with the many issues these homes present. The first draft of this ordinance developed by the L.A. Planning Department was written and has been rejected by community leaders. A revised ordinance has been developed and is receiving a great deal of support from citizens and various groups across the city. This new ordinance is adding definitions to bring the LAMC into conformance with the California Community Care Facilities Act. It defines; a Licensed Community Care Facility; a licensed Residential Care Facility for the Elderly; and an Alcoholism or Drug Abuse Recovery or Treatment Facility as per the appropriate sections of the State Health and Safety Code. Also in the revised ordinance there are additions and Amendments to Sections 12.21; 12.22; and 14.00 of the LAMC. The revised ordinance is being forwarded to the City Council's Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUM) before it moves on to the City Council for a final vote.

Transportation Report - Bart Reed

NBC Universal is working to advance its Evolution Plan, which calls for upgrading its production and post-production facilities, revitalizing its entertainment venues, providing modern office space and building a new residential neighborhood with 35 acres of open space. (It is unrelated to the Metro Studio@Lankershim

proposed project near Universal City.) As part of the Evolution plan, NBC Universal proposes several transit improvements to mitigate traffic in the area and describe the project as transit-oriented development. Bart believes the proposed traffic mitigation plan is both inadequate and ill-focused. Particularly, Evolution plans to add parking spaces in the area, which would induce additional traffic. Bart believes there are meaningful alternatives that can potentially increase transit usage and hinder growth in car trips in the area. The I-405 Freeway carries over 300,000 trips across the Sepulveda Pass every day. Two of the nation's top freeway interchanges by traffic volume, I-405 / I-10 and I-405 / US-101, are along this corridor. An existing project to add a northbound High-Occupancy Vehicle lane on the I-405 Freeway is under construction. Bart proposes a long-term solution to the corridor: The I-405 Rail Corridor, which would combine the Sepulveda Pass and Van Nuys transit projects, both funded under Measure R, into one seamless project that benefits people along its route and brings rapid transit to the suburban community.

For more information on the above issues go to **www.transitcoalition.org**
Bart Reed is the Executive Director of the Transit Coalition.

The next regular monthly meeting of Valley VOTE will be **Monday, March, 21 2011** at Galpin Ford.

Valley VOTE Mission Statement

Valley VOTE, a diverse coalition of San Fernando Valley residents, businesspeople, educators, community activists, and organizations, is committed to exploring and fostering the implementation of programs that empower the people of the San Fernando Valley and the City of Los Angeles, to improve local governance, education and public participation on policy matters. Please forward this Email to interested individuals and organizations. If you would like to be removed from our distribution list please send an Email to javittisr@cs.com