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News

Councilwoman Schipske Proposes LB Consider Gambling [Gaming] In And Around Queen Mary Area



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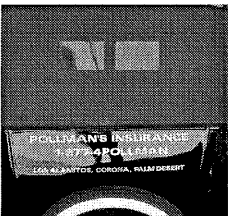


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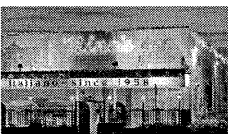
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(August 4, 2007) -- LB Councilwoman Gerrie Schipske has proposed that the City of Long Beach consider gambling [gaming] in and around the Queen Mary area.

In an essay on her independent [non-taxpayer funded] [internet journal \(blog\)](#) on which she frequently shares her policy views, Councilwoman Schipske cites several reasons that caused her to "change her mind about pursuing this avenue."

"I would not have proposed this several years ago because there is a part of me that believes government should not encourage gambling -- but folks, the City of Long Beach is losing out on an opportunity to capture revenue by allowing gambling in or around the Queen Mary area -- an area by the way that is nowhere near a residential area," the ELB Councilwoman writes.

In her essay titled "Long Beach Needs to Look for Source of Revenue: What About an Indian Casino?" Councilwoman Schipske states in pertinent part:

Face it. We are not going to be the retail mecca of Southern California that derives its City budget from sales tax revenue. (Especially when we keep giving some of it away as an incentive to come here...)

Our residents will not support (rightfully) an increase in the utility use tax or special assessment fees.

The three top employers in the City are public agencies: CSULB, LBUSD and the City of Long Beach.

More than 40% of the City is in a "redevelopment zone" which means we lose the tax increment so it can be used to spruce up areas that largely do not generate additional tax revenue.

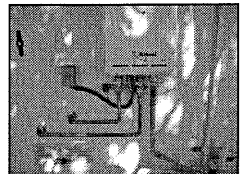
Our ability to attract tourism is minimal because we compete with Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm and Universal Studios.



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We are hoping that somebody will step forward and "put lipstick on the pig" as one person described the Queen Mary to me one day, so that visitors will have a reason to go back after their one and only visit there.

The Port of Los Angeles is kicking in big bucks to build a cruise terminal on their side of the port that will draw all the big cruise lines...

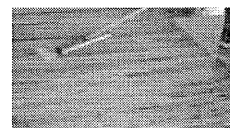
Councilwoman Schipske said she changed her mind about pursuing gambling [gaming] in the Queen Mary area because "poker has become mainstreamed through the televised games of the World Poker Tour (WPT) -- which is based in Culver City and should be lured away to set up shop in Long Beach. Even last week, the Jewish Community Center in Long Beach held a "Texas Hold'em Boot Camp" for women to teach women how to compete in an upcoming tournament. (Last year, Long Beach Community Hospital Foundation used a poker tournament as a fundrasing device.)"

Schipske said the City has a couple of options: "card clubs where poker and other card games are played are legal throughout California with the approval of the residents of Long Beach. Indian casinos which offer Las Vegas type gambling are also legal in California with certain approvals. The Gabrielino-Tongva tribal nation of the Los Angeles basin has roots in the Long Beach area and can apply for recognition for a casino in Long Beach."

Councilwoman Schipske's blog linked to a study on the Tongava tribe's website about what Compton is proposing to do ([click here](#)).

Schipske concluded, "Long Beach would have to be careful how we enter into this area. But other cities have done it successfully without an increase in crime or problems in the residential areas and have realized a steady source of revenue to fund city services."

Councilwoman Schipske's proposal comes just days after city management offered the City Council a proposed FY 08 budget which indicated City Hall would return to its "structural deficit" (ongoing spending exceeding ongoing revenue) in one year without additional resources or service reductions. In forwarding the budget to the Council with his recommendations, LB Mayor Bob Foster said the city was at a "tipping point" and "now lives paycheck-to-paycheck, unable to adequately maintain or invest in streets and sidewalks, civic facilities or our workforce." The Mayor suggested that all options should be on the table...possibly including selling off some City-owned assets.



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The idea of gaming at the Queen Mary site was suggested almost exactly one year ago by downtown Pine Ave. businessman John Morris (Smooth's Sports Grille) on ***LBReport.com***. In an essay he titled "Time To Consider Casino Gaming For Queen Mary Area Development," Mr. Morris wrote in part on ***LBReport.com***:

"It's time to consider the Queen Mary area -- that large, potentially lucrative across-the-bay development strip -- as suitable for casino-style gaming and the revenue it could bring. City Hall needn't threaten Long Beach businesses and residents with a tax increase to pay for police and fire services. Casino-style gaming in the Queen Mary development area could help deliver that revenue..."

To view Mr. Morris' August 2006 ***LBReport.com*** essay in full, [click here](#).

To view Councilwoman Schipske's August 5, 2007 blog essay in full, click [Schipske: Long Beach Needs to Look for Source of Revenue: What About an Indian Casino?](#)

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