



## Solutions for Our City

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Having earned its name Los Angeles in 1781, our city was incorporated in 1850. In the ensuing 175 years, wave after wave of immigrants flooded into Southern California. These new Californians built wall-to-wall homes and businesses crowded up against the coast, sprawling farther and farther inland with each passing year.

These immigrants came for what seemed like limitless sunshine, land, job opportunities and personal freedoms. The most important function of state and local governments was literally to pave the way for all those immigrants – build the aqueducts and roads and schools and power plants and sewage systems that would allow ever greater numbers of young people from all over the world happily to pursue their own versions of the California Dream. Otherwise, government, stay out of the way. This is the land of entrepreneurial spirit and personal initiative.

Those of us living in the City of the Angels today still cling to the founding myth of life without limits. But deep inside we realize things have changed. We are reminded of this reality each and every time we try to go from point A to point B in the California conveyance of choice – the ubiquitous automobile. Be assured that earlier immigrants didn't come to California to spend countless hours alone in their automobiles. With or without cell phones, that's a nightmare, not a dream. But that's our reality. Still, we cling to the past. We nostalgically call them freeways when many are no-ways. And we naively pass infrastructure bond measures as if we could build our way out of the troubles we are in.

It's not just travel that is experiencing limits. Everywhere we look today there are new limits that create new problems in search of solutions – air quality, land-use patterns, water, energy, climate, roads, middle-class jobs, educational opportunities, affordable housing, and accessible healthcare to name a few. Even life itself seems limited now that California baby boomers have packed away their tie-dyed

t-shirts, hemp jewelry and water pipes in favor of fashionable golf-wear suited to the retirement communities popping up everywhere.

Our new problems need new solutions. The premise of "Solutions for Our City" is that the best solutions will emerge with the broadest and most-informed public debate. To create this book of solutions, we cast the net widely, asking Angelenos representing every facet of life to offer their solutions in two-page op-ed pieces. We didn't want to hear a litany of problems – we wanted the solutions. What can our local and state government do? What can our businesses and our schools do? What can our families do? What can we as individuals do? And what if we all worked together?

In response to our invitations, we have received 37 creative solutions from 40 distinguished Angelenos. Some of these solutions may seem familiar to some of you, but many will surprise most of you. That is the intent – to unleash the unique entrepreneurial spirit of individual Californians to solve the new problems we face.

These solutions have been arranged into categories and are published in this book distributed at the April 2, 2007 UCLA Anderson Quarterly Forecast conference, attended by many of the solution authors. These solutions serve as the basis for a discussion during that conference which culminates in a keynote address by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, thus closing the loop between our citizens and our elected officials.

Of course, a half-day to discuss these solutions is not going miraculously to solve all our problems. The conversation must go on. Toward that end, all of these essays are posted on our website: [www.uclaforecast.com](http://www.uclaforecast.com). This posting will be a living, evolving document, with new solutions posted periodically, and with room for discussion of the solutions proposed. If you have a great idea, or a half-baked idea, please make a visit, and post it there. It could make a difference.