Leiweke lays out plan to bring NFL back to L.A.

AEG President and CEO Tim Leiweke said that his company has a plan and the financial commitment to bring the NFL back to Los Angeles during the luncheon portion of the Valley Industry and Commerce Association’s (VICA) 22nd Annual Business Forecast Conference. Leiweke said that Los Angeles is the entertainment capitol of the world and needs to own that title. He also addressed fears that California has lost its shine.

At the forecast breakfast, expert economists differed on their assessments of the current economic climate and predictions for the upcoming year. James Paulsen (Wells Capital Management) was the most optimistic of the three and began the discussion by telling attendees that the recovery is a typical one and jobs usually lag behind other indicators.

Bill Watkins (Center for Economic Research & Forecasting at California Lutheran University) had the least optimistic projections of the day opening his presentation with a photograph of a train wreck to illustrate California’s current economic conditions.

William Roberts (San Fernando Valley Economic Research Center at CSU, Northridge) echoed many of Paulsen’s points and said that he expects the Valley to recover quicker than the rest of California and parts of the nation.

Don St. Clair of Woodbury University served as the panel moderator.

He said that Southern California is still the best place in the world to do business; it just takes an understanding of the city’s structure and limitations.

AEG is proposing not just an NFL stadium, but an event and convention destination. The company wants to build a stadium that would connect with the Convention Center and L.A. Live to create an entertainment hub that would not only house an NFL team, but could host World Cup 2022 if the United States wins its bid for the event. Leiweke said that they will spend $1 billion of all privately invested funds for the project that he estimates will create 25,000 jobs annually in the city.

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Breakout Sessions
Countdown to Election 2010

Moderated by Harvey Englander, Englander, Knabe & Allen
- Hal Dash, Cerrell Associates (pictured above, right)
- Allen Hoffenblum, Allen Hoffenblum & Associates (pictured above)
- Steve Maviglio, Forza Communications

California politicos opined about the upcoming general election on Nov. 2, campaign strategies and the use of negative ads, and how the results will impact the political landscape during the Countdown to Election 2010 panel. The panel predicted a Democratic sweep for California statewide offices, with the expectation of Republican and L.A. County District Attorney Steve Cooley running for Attorney General against Democrat and San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris.

Healthcare: A Boost or Bust for Business?

Moderated by Duke Helfand, Los Angeles Times
- Daniel Faraci, Alliance for Affordable Services
- Magan Ray, Greenberg Traurig (pictured above, left)
- Herb Schultz, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
- Michael Shaw, National Federation of Independent Business (pictured above)

As many businesses worry how federal and state healthcare reform will impact their bottom line, expert panelists considered whether the reforms would be A Boost or Bust for Business. The group laid out the basics of the law and explained the role of healthcare exchanges in the reform. They also discussed how the law will impact upcoming elections and the way the results of the elections will affect the law.

TRANSPORTATION: From Horse & Buggy to High Speed Rail

Moderated by Coby King, The MWW Group (pictured above, left)
- Linda Bohlinger, HNTB Corporation (pictured above)
- Frank Quintero, Burbank/Glendale Pasadena Airport Authority
- Dan Tempelis, California High Speed Rail
- Denny Zane, Move LA

Recent transportation advancements in the state and Los Angeles County gave participants on the From Horse & Buggy to High Speed Rail panel a great deal to discuss. The group felt that the passage of Measure R and the 30/10 initiative have the potential to change the transit landscape in Southern California. These improvements paired with the proposed intermodal transit hub at Bob Hope Airport and high speed rail projects create many opportunities for improving the way people move through the region.

The Changing Face of Media

Moderated by Cindy Starrett, Latham & Watkins
- Paul Krekorian, Los Angeles City Councilmember
- Michael LoGrande, Los Angeles Department of Planning
- Mark Mullen, City of Los Angeles
- Bud Ovrom, Los Angeles Department of Building & Safety

Attendees at the Reinvigorating Development interactive roundtable discussion had an unusual opportunity to sit down with decision makers and department heads from the City of Los Angeles to gather ideas to improve the development process. The panel addressed why the 12-2 proposal that would have condensed the 12 departments required for permitting down to two failed and questioned why the process could not be condensed to just one department. The need for code reform was also touched on by the panelists.

Technology: The New Frontier

Moderated by Daymond Rice, Vons
- Paul Beach, Qualion
- Joseph Essas, eHarmony (pictured above, right)
- Dave Rogers, Microsoft (pictured above)
- Dan Weinstein, GRID Partners

The Business Forecast Conference’s technology panel covered the benefits and incentives for going green, privacy issues and protecting company data, and how technology can improve lives. As technology advances and computers get smaller and smaller, panelist Dave Rogers from Microsoft assured attendees that the desktop pc will not be in a museum anytime soon.

Reinvigorating Development: An Interactive Roundtable

Moderated by Kevin James, NewsTalk 870 KRLA (pictured above)
- Cameron Death, Digital Studio-NBC Universal (pictured above, left)
- Jack Klunder, Los Angeles Daily News
- Mark Lacter, LA Biz Observed

Media veterans from film and television, print, online and radio addressed changing technology and how it impacts their field during the Changing Face of Media Panel. They discussed how these changes can hurt credibility of content due to the increased speed of reporting. Looking forward, the panelists also considered how to improve opportunities for young people entering the field.