

A VERY detailed “auto-biography” of Fred Strong

Personal Background

I was born in Milwaukee, WI, in 1937, and educated in public and parochial elementary schools, Marquette University High School, Marquette University, and Lincoln University School of Law. I have been active in governmental projects and positions since 1952.

I moved to California in 1963, and spent the years up to 1981 working on governmental and land use projects in many regions around the country, but primarily in San Luis Obispo County and the Bay Area.

Recent Activities (1981 – Present)

I have lived in Paso Robles full-time since 1981. My recent local experience includes: Radio personality, news department and host of “Soundoff” on KPRL, as well as lead reporter and editor-in-chief for The Daily Press, editor-in-chief for the Country News, writer and editor of The Citizen and author/producer of the print and radio versions of “A Strong Point of View” opinion and commentary (1982–1998). I simultaneously worked for a close clientele in land use consulting.

County Government liaison and advocate for the Paso Robles Vintners and Growers Association; PRVGA representative on the Agricultural Advisory Committee of San Luis Obispo County in the early 1990s.

Study on the legal requirements for the provision by the railroad of a railroad station and service in Paso Robles for the Paso Robles Inn, Lyndon Chandler, (1994–95).
“Study of Factors In Possibly Re-opening The Paso Robles Inn’s Hot Mineral Springs”. March 14, 1995.

Elected First District Representative to the San Luis Obispo County Republican Central Committee and, subsequently, as Central Committee Treasurer (1998).

Helped Paso Robles’ City Councilmen secure free Airport Planning services from the largest airport planning and management company in the world (1998–99).

Contract study for the City of Paso Robles on the legal basis and history for the expansion of the Salinas River Dam (1998–99).

Elected to the Paso Robles City Council in 2004 and re-elected in 2008. Elected by the City Council to be the Mayor Pro Tem for the term 2009–2011.

I currently represent a few private clients regarding property in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo and Monterey counties.

I represent, or have represented, the City on, or as liaison to:
The Economic Development Strategy Committee
San Luis Obispo Council of Governments
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
Economic Vitality Corporation
Integrated Waste Management Authority
Paso Robles Housing Authority

Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce
Paso Robles Main Street Association
Senior Citizen Advisory Committee
Paso Robles schools and Cuesta College
Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance
Pioneer Museum Board of Trustees
Library Board of Trustees

State of California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) co-operative committee on the re-purposing of State property within the City of El Paso de Robles, dealing with conversion of the previous Youth Authority facility to a Men's Medium Security Prison, re-establishment of a Cal Fire camp and a possible "Re-entry Facility".

I also represent the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments on the LOSSAN (Southern California Coast Passenger City-to-City Rail Authority) Board of Directors, By-Laws and Joint Powers Agreement committees.

I have continuously spent between 120 and 160 hours a month on this, two League of California Cities' policy committees and sub-committees,* alternate and/or member on the LOSSAN Rail Corridor Agency Joint Powers Board and the Coast Rail Coordinating Council and the Ad Hoc Committees I have previously served on or am currently serving on:

- Hazard Mitigation Plans
- Selection of Consultant for Roundabout evaluation
- Cost of Services Study
- Consultant Selection for Compliance with and Mitigation Plan regarding the Americans With Disabilities Act
- Consultant Selection for Purple Belt Plan
- Consultant Selection for Olsen and Beechwood Specific Plans
- Downtown Parking and Circulation; Proposals regarding the Purple Belt
- Olsen Ranch Specific Plan
- Beechwood Specific Plan
- Chandler Ranch Specific Plan
- Highway 46 east Corridor Study
- AB1600 Fee Update; South River Road/Charolais Roundabout Feasibility Study
- Review of Chamber/VCB and Main Street contracts for Tourism Promotion
- Redevelopment Proposals at 12th and Spring/Park Parking Lot.

I also have consistently followed, reviewed, researched and testified, in writing and in person, on water plans, policies and legislation. My written testimony has been regularly posted on the State's web site. Some of my "suggestions" have been, or are in process of being, adopted.

* I was a very active leader on the Revenue and Taxation Policy Committee and subcommittees on Standard Sales and Use Tax Agreement between California and other states, Model Ordinance for California Cities regarding Transient Occupancy Taxes. I worked very diligently on the Housing, Community and Economic Development Policy Committee and subcommittees on Homeless Housing Bond Funds Allocation, AB 32 (Climate Change), AB2175 (Mandatory Water Conservation), and Water Task Force (developing the revised policies regarding water legislation and regulation throughout California).

In January 2010, in both committees, I introduced a motion asking the Board of Directors to request that the Governor implement Section 38599 of AB 32 to suspend implementation of all climate change regulations for one year, along with time extensions for compliance. The motion passed in both committees and did so unanimously in the HCED committee.

In February I went to Los Angeles and supported equal representation for San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties with Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego counties on regional passenger rail decisions. My work on the committee gathered support from staff and elected officials in all jurisdictions as I also brought Amtrak to the table without a vote. Then I went to Sacramento and opposed the elimination of all secure state funding for passenger rail, commuter rail and public transit so that the state could cut education funding. What a tragedy! At the same time I gathered in a report on proposals to make Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) fair and equitable across the state. That meeting with the counties, cities, hotel industry and financial officers from across the state will be ongoing for the balance of this year and I will be present and participating.

Personal

Married to Ruth Mary Taft, grandniece of President William Howard Taft, in 1957. Divorced in 1967. Ruth passed away in 2007.

Married to my wife Patty, grand-grandniece of President James Buchanan, in 1980. Patty has been a local AVON representative for many years, consistently achieving a national level of recognition for sales and service.

I have five children and six grandchildren. One child, born in this county, attended the University of Southern Illinois and now lives in Bend, Oregon with his wife who has an earned her Master's degree in accounting and currently works in the Finance Department of the City of Grants Pass. Three of my other children all received their Bachelor's degrees from California State University, Sacramento, two of which went on to complete their Doctorates at the University of California, Davis (one in physics, the other in electrical engineering).

Patty and I have directly helped to raise one grandchild, who was educated locally for three years at Winifred Pifer Elementary School.

Early Days 1942-1981

In my early years I had many experiences that helped to reinforce my community-minded sense of responsibility. These items include:

A strong sense of family and community with previous generations who helped create this nation and many states. My grandmother grew up in a trading post on the indian frontier and was interviewed for historical pieces as she grew older. My mother was titled the "mother" of my childhood community as she helped create it and administer it. My father was the justice of the peace and local barber. My grandfather, on my mother's side, fought in the civil war. Her mother escaped prejudice and oppression in Germany for freedom in America. My father's family arrived in Massachusetts in 1628, pioneered Indiana, Wisconsin and California. Our indian ancestors, Ottawa and Chippewa, were here to greet the other members of the family when they arrived and fought side-by-side to oppose oppression from European "masters" during the early years of emerging civilization on this continent.

I learned community and national pride working at scrap metal and paper drives during WWII, helping with a Victory Garden (pulling weeds) and weeding and harvesting vegetables four hours a day, Monday – Friday, during the summer school vacation months from ages 5 –10 in “truck farm” vegetables fields.

In 1944 my only brother was born and had severe asthma. My mother and father both worked so I was designated the “baby-sitter, at age 10,” when I wasn’t in school. Also, because I had no sisters I was the one who was taught to grocery shop, cook, bake, clean, sew, and generally run the household within a budget (where we sometimes “robbed Peter to pay Paul”). When my brother nearly died at age three, we traveled to Denver so he could get treatment at the National Asthma Clinic. That three months saved his life and earned me a southern accent for a time, as Wheatridge was populated by Texas transplants.

I had a paper route with 125 to 200 customers for an afternoon paper that I did by bicycle during my teens. I also worked at mowing lawns and landscape trimming in a rural area on various estates as a young teenager and ran the family farm growing and harvesting alfalfa, apples, cherries, pears, Concord grapes and raising chickens for eggs and rabbits for fur, meat and show. I helped out our neighbors with the dairy, the florists’ gardens and hot houses, and the grain and hay harvesting in our rural area in exchange for harvesting help for our crops. When the rabbit portion of the operation reached 2,000 rabbits in house I began buying feed by the truck load and many neighbors bought their feed from me which helped reduce my costs through a slight mark-up on my part.

During high school I participated in track, boxing, fencing, debate and forensics and was given six years of college and university scholarships as a result of achievements in the debate and forensics area. However, I chose Marquette University (with no scholarship) instead of the scholarship at Northwestern University.

I became politically involved at the youth group level in 1952 and was affiliated with the conservative arm of the Young Democrats. We supported Sen. Alexander Wiley (R-WI) in his efforts for the creation of the Saint Lawrence Seaway and I assisted Rep. Charles Kersten (R-WI) in his efforts as Chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee in the investigation leading to the conviction of Ethel Webb for subversive and traitorous activity (1953–55).

I rose through the political ranks as State Membership Chairman, State Secretary and State Chairman (1953–1957).

At Sen. Estes Kefauver of Tennessee’s request, through his executive assistant (Esther Lipson ... later Esther Coopersmith), I wrote the Senate Farm Bill of 1954 now considered to be one of the landmark pieces of farm legislation of the 20th Century. I also wrote the draft legislation for the Civil Rights Bill of 1954 calling for year-by-year, grade-by-grade, integration of public schools which was carried by Kefauver and defeated through opposition by civil rights activists.

I was a licensed AM/FM radio station operator/disc jockey/news person at WTKM, Hartford, and WFMR, Milwaukee (1954–1959).

I was employed as a union painter, was a partner in a Painting company, owned my own painting company (1954 and 1959), drove taxicab and bartended to help with university expenses and early family life.

I also worked as a lithographic color artist for W.A. Krueger Printing Company (1957–1958).

I served as campaign aide, researcher, draft speechwriter, and/or State Chairman for candidates for the presidency: Estes Kefauver, Hubert Humphrey and John F. Kennedy (1955 – 1960).

I served as aide or campaign manager for numerous candidates for Governor, Senate and Assembly (1957–1962).

I worked in the newspaper field for William Randolph Hearst's Milwaukee Sentinel and as Editor-in-Chief of the Milwaukee Gazette, with a syndicated opinion column called "A Strong Point of View" (1957–1960).

I ran for Sixth Ward Alderman of the City of Milwaukee in 1958 on a platform of urban renewal. Defeated.

My platform was picked up and implemented by newly elected Mayor Henry Meier, resulting in \$2.5 billion of private sector downtown urban renewal at no direct cost to the public.

I accepted the position of Director of Foreign Language Laboratories at Marquette University (1961–1963).

I was elected President of the local chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in 1962 but declined to serve for personal reasons.

I accepted a position as Director of Foreign Language Labs at San Jose State, declining an identical position at Princeton University, in 1963, and moved to Los Gatos.

I resigned my position with San Jose State due to what I perceived as unethical budget procedures and cancelled a pending contract with Princeton in 1964 to seek other opportunities in California.

I entered the employment agency field as Counselor, progressing to office manager, general manager of six offices, and owner (1964 – 1968).

I took one year of law school at Lincoln University School of Law, San Jose Campus, in 1966–67.

A was a member of the Entryway Committee for the City of Milpitas (1966–67).

I was elected Northwood Park Homeowners Association President in 1968, reviewed and commented on various proposals affecting that neighborhood in San Jose and managed the community pool and common areas as a member of a parallel board of directors.

When we opposed an extreme expansion of the San Jose Airport I was appointed to the airport subcommittee of the Planning Policy Committee of Santa Clara County (1968–70).

When our local schools, already on double sessions, were threatened with triple sessions I organized a group to go to Sacramento along with people from the Santa Theresa area and acquired over \$6 million from the State of California for immediate school construction in the Berryessa and Oak Creek school districts (1968).

I wrote and had Senator Al Alquist of San Jose carry an amendment to the Subdivision Map Act for the protection of school planning and school sites (1969).

I served as Finance Chairman for the Ponderosa District of the Boy Scouts of America (1969–70).

I was a member of the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on Crime for Mayors Ron James and Norman Mineta, Secretary of Transportation for President George W. Bush, (1969–72).

I was chairman of the Parks and Recreation Bond needs study for the City of San Jose (1968–69).

I co-chaired the General Obligation Bond campaign for the City of San Jose (1970). Successful.

I was a member of the Regional Housing Needs Study for the Bay Area (1968-1970).

I was involved in creation of the Development Fee/Property Transfer Tax legislation for the City of San Jose (1969-70) for which I did the long range analysis and projections (within 1% accuracy over five years).

I was National Director of Market Analysis, Planning and Legislative Representation for Pacific Western Mobile Estates and Hallmark Group Companies, the 26th largest developer in the United States. I was closely involved with the creation of housing for all economic levels including over 4,000 units of low and moderate-income housing (1969-1973).

I performed a market analysis of Paso Robles in 1969 with a recommendation to not build any large projects in this city until after the year 2000. I believed the impact of a 900-unit project on Creston Road would destroy the character of the community.

I consulted on the landscape and development standards and agreements for the City of Golden, CO (1971-72).

I did project level sewage and storm water disposal problem solving, Algonac Township, MI (1970-71).

I moved to San Luis Obispo County in 1973, at the request of many pioneer families, to protect property rights and prevent inverse condemnation of family properties between the Cities of San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay from Highway 1 to Los Osos Valley Road. Successful (1973-74).

I accepted a position as Chief Executive Officer of Citizens For Environmental Balance and Economic Stability (C.E.B.E.S.), an organization representing over 5,000 people in San Luis Obispo County involving all aspects of General Plan, Zoning, Environmental and Economic issues for the county and all of its cities. I became personally involved in all local legislation having to do with property rights, land use and budgeting as it affected those issues (1974-1977).

Elected National Representative for the California Concerned Citizens Coalition. Representing California in issues conferences and with Presidential advisors (1976-1980).

F. Strong & Associates, land use consultants, has been in existence since 1969 and has had offices in San Jose, San Luis Obispo, Santa Rosa and Paso Robles. This service has represented the private and public sectors throughout the United States and in every local governmental jurisdiction. Although I am currently semi-retired, limiting my clientele to no more than four at any one time, my files and research materials are kept current in all areas, as needed.

I was a founding member of the Local Government Relations Committee of the California Association of Realtors (1976) and local Government legislative advocate for every Board of Realtors in San Luis Obispo County (1977-1979).

I did a grant study for the BIA on effects of agricultural land conversion upon the farmers of San Jose (1977-78).

I was chairman of the Sonoma County Committee for Proposition 13 (Jarvis-Gann).

I was a guest speaker and lecturer at the League of California Cities' Mayors' and Councilmen's Academy and annual conventions (1975 - 1978) as well as at the County Supervisor's Association of California (Assessor's Division - 1976).

I accepted a position in Sonoma County as the CEO of the Sonoma County Alliance, a sister group to C.E.B.E.S., and split my time between offices and residences here and there (1977 - 1981).

Between 1977 and 1981 I worked on numerous amendments to State and local laws, studies, State Policy documents involving state-wide planning and policies in the fields of commercial, industrial and residential development, transportation, water, waste disposal, timber harvests, mine reclamation projects, dams, geologic research and policies involving public safety, public finances and tax policies and procedures.