

Controller Laura Chick on KPCC's Larry Mantle "Air Talk", Dec. 23, 2008

It just feels wrong, it feels like were going backwards, like were starting to use Chicago as our role model city you know the way Chicago gets things done where deals are being struck behind closed doors all the time and the public isn't in the mix very much.

What's wrong to me is the process, something moved very quickly within three weeks with the most minimal public discussion, very little committee review. Typically, the council members all want an issue that remotely relates to their committee to go to their committee. It is not at all unusual for issues especially things going on the ballot to go to two or three committees. Certainly, the Budget and Finance Committee, Councilman Parks' committee, to look at issues of fiscal impact, and potential cost. None of that happened here.

Three weeks, this thing I think maybe went to one committee very little debate, or discussion or reports presented or analysis requested... and boom its going on the ballot. **We hear that taxpayer dollars were spent for outside consultant expert adviceand that advice it seems was suppressed, suppressed even within the council and certainly to the public, including really some disingenuous efforts made to deny the existence of the report and to keep this information hidden and secret.**

On top of that, a last-minute, stealth, at the 12th hour, almost as the clock was striking midnight, a heavy-hitting political lawyer serves a lawsuit against the citizens who have written the against argument on this solar ballot measure and yanks them into court and I think suing for legal fees as well...They're going to teach them a lesson. What is going on in City Hall...?

This is an anti-transparency City Hall right now

The process stinks here. Green power and solar power, we know are good things. Creating union wage jobs is a good thing. That's how our middle class is hanging on by their fingernails. But the public deserves to have thoughtful open public airings of different points of view of potential risks of the different analyses...

The way a council member should be making a decision is listening to all of those different points of view. There was no rush here but there seems to a rush here. What is that about...

My suspicion is the decision was made behind closed doors with visits from proponents of this to individual elected officials and discussions, not illegal, not violating the Brown Act, were had and everybody got on board and was told this is a good thing. This is certainly a step to helping the mayor deliver on a promise that is really been pie in the sky and that's 20 percent renewable energy by 2010 for L.A.

The decision was made at that front end without needing to have the questions really analyzed asked and answered. It was a deal that was cut. It's my basic philosophy as an elected official that when you do things that way, when you're cutting deals and you don't want to discuss in detail in public, that's not in the best interest of the public.

Laura Chick: Chicago-style Politics Hits L.A.

By [Ron Kaye](#) on December 23, 2008 4:15 PM |

Back room deals, critical reports kept secret, basic processes violated, insiders get the money, the public be damned -- that's what City Controller Laura Chick sees in the mayor and City Council's mad rush to put the largest solar energy plan in U.S. history on the ballot in just three weeks.

The Department of Water and Power, its engineers, planner and even its board, were left out of the process.

The only public airings of the scheme -- or what passed for them -- left council members and public in the dark. Council President Eric Garcetti defends the process he controlled by saying he investigated so nobody else needed to read the devastating critique by the DWP's consultant.

On Larry Mantle's "[Air Talk](#)" Tuesday on KPCC, Chick did what no one else in public life in L.A. has the courage to do, saying the whole deal smacks of Chicago-style politics -- something unheard of in a city that used to boast about its clean government.

Here's what Chick had to say, listen for yourself, it's important: [chick1.mp3](#) [chick2.mp3](#)

<http://ronkayela.com/2008/12/laura-chick-chicagostyle-polit.html>