

## Year in Review: Government

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Throwing in some controversial measures, plans and an election year, it was a busy 2014 for government in the Central Valley.

Most recently the Fresno City Council passed a 2035 General Plan update that focuses more on infill development. The measure passed despite opposition from two members of the council as well as from local developers and even smart-growth proponents.

It was a victory for Fresno Mayor Ashley Swearengin, who couldn't claim the same for her state controller run as well as a plan to raise water rates to help pay for infrastructure improvements.

The city has hosted a number of forums on the mayor's water plan in recent months, with the council approving in November a vote by Fresno water users on rate increases.

Swearengin's Business Friendly Fresno task force announced progress this year in its efforts to make the town user-friendlier for new or expanding businesses. Much of the effort centered on making it easier and quicker to secure city permits for business projects.

It was a close call for Rep. Jim Costa (D-Fresno), who nearly lost his seat to challenger Johnny Tacherra. It wasn't much of a contest for the challengers of Devin Nunes (R-Tulare), who was recently named chairman of the House Intelligence Committee.

Another race that polarized the Fresno business community was the Fresno Superior Court judgeship battle between Rachel Hill and Lisa Gamoian, with Gamoian ultimately coming out ahead.

Good news came out of Lemoore with the announcement the Navy would based its West Coast fleet of F-35C aircraft at its naval base in the South Valley town.

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