



TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PUBLIC WORKS POLICY COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

Friday, January 27, 2023

ATTENDANCE

Members: Priya Bhat-Patel (Chair); Colleen Wallace (V. Chair); Holly Andreatta; Newell Arnerich; Sane Barnes; Vida Barone; Liz Becerra; Mateo Bedolla; Brigit Bennington; Daniel Bobadilla; Kristen Brown; John Cale; Amanda Carter; Omar Dadabhoy; Ken Domer; Robert Engler; John Erickson; Paul Fadelli; Ben Fine; Alice Fredericks; Christopher Freeland; Lucy Garcia; Garg Gaurav; Teresa Gerring; Jan Harnik; Alma Hernandez; Kelly Honig; Elaine Jeng; Ryan Johansen; Mike Johnson; Fred Jung; Chris Kelley; Lynne Kennedy; Peter Kraut; Jeffrey Maloney; Elmer Martinez Saballos; Patricia Matthews; Linda Molina; Devin Murphy; Jenelle Osborne; Kelli Pickler; Rachel Radell-Harris; Michael Rogers; Shanelle Scales-Preston; Ann Schneider; Alexander Trinidad; Miki Tsubota; Steve Vargas; Dennis Wilberg; Scott Wolfe; Brian Wright-Bushman; Aaron Zavala; Yan Zhao; Brianne Zorn

Staff: Damon Conklin, Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist
Waleed Hojeij, Policy and Legislative Affairs Analyst

I. **Welcome and Introductions**

President Ali Sajjad Taj, Council Member, Artesia, welcomed everyone to the first policy committee meeting of the year and thanked members for their service to all California cities. He explained that policy committees are vitally important and directly connected to Cal Cities' core mission of advocating for the common interests of cities.

President Taj then introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director and CEO. Ms. Coleman welcomed committee members and thanked them for their service to their cities and Cal Cities. She explained that the policy committee process is central to Cal Cities advocacy, ensuring it is member driven and represents the interests of cities across California. Ms. Coleman thanked committee members again for serving on the committees and wished them a great meeting.

Chair Bhat-Patel and Vice Chair Wallace welcomed committee members and introduced themselves.

II. **Public Comment**

Chair Bhat-Patel asked if there was any public comment. None were provided.

III. **General Briefing**

In accordance with the customary practice of convening all policy committee members for a general briefing prior to the start of policy committee meetings, Cal Cities staff provided a General Briefing of all policy areas, which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities, as detailed below. The

Advocacy team's complete analysis of the [Governor's proposed budget for 2023-24](#) and the [2023 Advocacy Priorities](#) are available on the Cal Cities' website.

- **Community Services:** The Governor's proposed 2023-24 budget maintains funding for homelessness and urges the Legislature to introduce new accountability measures for local governments, included in [AB 799](#) (Luz Rivas, 2023). In 2023, Cal Cities will focus on implementing the Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Act, modernizing the behavioral health system, addressing the substance use crisis, including fentanyl overdoses among young Californians, and securing ongoing funding for cities to address homelessness.
 - [Caroline Cirincione](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Environmental Quality:** The Governor's proposed 2023-24 budget includes reductions in climate resiliency commitments, including programs for addressing extreme heat, community resilience, and coastal resilience. The \$180 million that Cal Cities secured in the 2022 Budget Act for the implementation of organic waste diversion (SB 1383, Lara, 2016), remains in the budget. Throughout 2023, Cal Cities will focus on implementing [SB 54](#), landmark single-use plastic legislation enacted in 2022.
 - [Nick Romo](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Governance, Transparency, and Labor Relations:** Cal Cities is focused on modernizing the Brown Act and ensuring flexibility for local governments in hiring retired annuitants, while opposing legislation that could impact CalPERS returns, such as legislation to divestment from certain industries.
 - [Johnnie Ping](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Housing, Community, and Economic Development:** The Governor's proposed 2023-24 budget reduces funding for housing programs, including the Dream For All Program, CalHome Program, and Accessory Dwelling Unit Program. Cal Cities will continue to monitor and advocate for sustainable funding for affordable housing, while also monitoring restrictions on local land use authority, changes to development fees, and potential changes to [SB 35](#) (Wiener, 2017), which requires local governments to streamline certain housing projects.
 - [Jason Rhine](#), *Assistant Director, Legislative Affairs*
- **Public Safety:** The Governor's proposed 2023-24 budget prioritizes addressing the substance use crisis with nearly \$100 million to respond to fentanyl use, while also planning to close several state prisons and related prison facilities. Cal Cities will continue to monitor issues such as initiatives to change Proposition 47, emergency medical services efficiencies, emergency preparedness/response, and behavioral health.
 - [Elisa Arcidiacono](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*
- **Revenue and Taxation:** Cal Cities is committing to preserving existing local revenue streams and bolstering local fiscal sustainability. Cal Cities is strongly opposed to the [California Business Roundtable ballot measure](#) that would restrict new or increased taxes and jeopardize local fiscal sustainability and is actively monitoring introduced legislation that would create new tax exemption programs that would reduce local tax revenues.
 - [Jessica Sankus](#), *Senior Policy and Legislative Affairs Analyst*
- **Transportation, Communications, and Public Works:** Cal Cities is working with the California Air Resources Board to draft new language for its proposed Advanced

Clean Fleets regulations, local and state transportation funding, broadband expansion, and recycled water.

- o [Damon Conklin](#), *Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist*

IV. **Existing Policy and Guiding Principles**

Cal Cities staff provided highlights and a summary of the guiding principles for Transportation, Communications and Public Works. All available on page 67 of the 2022 existing policy and guiding principles ([Available here](#)).

V. **Cal Cities 2023 Advocacy Priorities**

The committee was updated on the Cal Cities 2023 Advocacy Priorities. Cal Cities staff summarized the results of the Cal Cities Leadership workshop and explained the process by which these priorities are developed and adopted. The Cal Cities 2023 Action Agenda is as follows:

1. **Protect and expand investments to prevent and reduce homelessness.** Secure sustainable state funding that bolsters cities' efforts to support individuals experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. While protecting existing resources, strengthen state and local partnerships to connect individuals with the care they need through coordinated care systems that provide access to wraparound services, including mental health and substance use treatment.
2. **Increase the supply and affordability of housing while retaining local decision making.** Secure long-term, sustainable funding tools for cities to jumpstart the construction of housing at all income levels and ensure cities retain flexibility to achieve local and state housing goals.
3. **Improve public safety in California communities.** Pursue strategies and resources to address crime and its underlying causes. Partner with all levels of government and diverse organizations to improve community safety through prevention and early intervention programming, workforce recruitment and retention, and improved reentry services.
4. **Safeguard essential local revenues and support fiscal sustainability.** Protect, increase, and modernize revenue streams for local priorities. Oppose efforts that would reduce or eliminate funding for cities, including unfunded mandates.

VI. **Review of TCPW 2023 Committee Survey Results**

To inform the committee's work program, committee members were asked to respond to an online survey selecting their top priorities for the committee to focus on in the coming year. These results were combined with the results of a live survey that was conducted during the committee meeting.

Chair Bhat-Patel provided an overview of the survey responses, proposed work program, and allowed for committee discussion. The committee agreed the work program was sufficiently broad enough and encompassed a wide swath of potential policy issues.

VII. Adoption of 2023 TCPW Work Program

The committee unanimously adopted (via voice vote) the following items as their 2023 work program:

- Water grid (conveyance and storage).
- Transit funding.
- Local street roads, maintenance and bridge repair and replacement (SB 1 and maintenance of effort).
- Disaster and emergency preparedness and response.
- Electric vehicle charging stations.

VIII. State Water Grid, Flood Management and Dam Safety

John Paasch, Deputy Director, Department of Water Resources Security and Emergency Management, provided an overview of the state water grid, including the conditions of the state's levees and dams.

Mr. Paasch indicated that there are major river systems, state water systems, federal projects, and local projects. It was announced that eighty percent of the state's rain fall was in January, February, and March, however forecasted demand for that water will not be for months later in the summer, thus the need for adequate water storage. Ground water used to make up the slack but now the state is starting to regulate ground water.

Mr. Paasch provided an update on specific levees, rivers, dams, and reservoirs. Reservoirs are still below average for this time of year. According to Mr. Paasch, additional data on water resources is needed to fully understand the interconnection between water systems.

Committee members asked questions related to the conveyance on water from Shasta and Oroville Dams to the delta and the status of tunnel project and how Cal Cities members be of greater assistance with storm water projects.

IX. Legislative and Budget Update and Outlook

Chair Bhat-Patel introduced Adam Quinonez, Director of State Relations and Kris Anderson, State Relations, Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), representing over 460 water agencies throughout California. Both highlighted bills related to water that ACWA is sponsoring, including permit streamlining, and shared with the committee a potential 2024 water bond initiative that ACWA is considering sponsoring.

Cal Cities staff provided a legislative outlook, including an overview of potential transportation, water infrastructure, broadband and public works related issues and bills of interest. Cal Cities staff explained that it is early in the legislative session and that hundreds of new bills would be introduced before the February 17 bill

introduction deadline. In the meantime, a list of the [Cal Cities TCPW bills can be found here](#).

Cal Cities provided a brief power point summary of the Governor's proposed budget as it relates to transportation and broadband.

X. Adjourn

Chair Bhat-Patel thanked the committee for their hard work and said some closing remarks. Chair Bhat-Patel then adjourned the meeting.