



**COMMUNITY SERVICES POLICY COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHTS
Friday, January 27, 2023**

ATTENDANCE

Members: Jacque Casillas (Chair); Holly Tillman (Vice Chair); Cindy Bagley; Debbie Baker; Kimberly Calvin; Desrie Campbell; Cassandra Candini-Tilton; Ruben Chavez; Sara Cowell; Christine Engel; Eddie Flores; Oscar Flores; Peggy Flynn; Stephanie Hellman; Rachel Hernandez; Jay Ingram; Angela Ivey; Benjamin Jones; Eric Knight; Jenny Knisley; Lydia Kuo; Jessica Lobedan; Bridgette Moore; Renee Morgan; Maria Nunez; Jason Nutt; Lori Ogorchock; Annalisa Perea; Todd Rigby; Nat Rojanasathira; David Shapiro; Susan Sonne; Elizabeth Talbott; Rafael Trujillo; William Uphoff; Liz Wynn

Cal Cities Partners: Desiree Haus; Brenda Narayan

Staff: Caroline Cirrincione, Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

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 Casillas and Vice Chair Tillman welcomed committee members and introduced themselves.

II. Public Comment

Chair Casillas asked if there was any public comment. There was no public comment.

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

IV. **California Continuums of Care (CoC) Presentation**

The committee received a presentation on California's Continuums of Care (CoCs), which included key information about the benefits of collaborating with CoCs to address homelessness and how to effectively draw down funding that flows through CoCs to address homelessness in cities.

Since CoCs are a federally funded program, the presentation included a federal perspective provided by former Cal Cities Board Member Helene Schneider, Regional Coordinator, U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. The committee also heard a local perspective from Karen Roper, Homeless Solutions Manager for the Corona-Norco Region, who also chairs the Riverside County CoC.

V. **Legislative Agenda**

To provide context to the proposed policy statement for consideration, Cal Cities staff began with an overview of fentanyl-related bills introduced so far this year and key budget allocations included in the Governor's proposed budget.

Cal Cities staff explained that historically, Cal Cities has not engaged on issues related to substance use because of the role counties play in providing public behavioral health services. In light of this, Cal Cities lacks existing policy that directs staff's engagement on these issues.

Due to the nature of the legislation introduced so far this year, the proposed statement was considered in both the Public Safety and Community Services Policy Committees. Since the Public Safety Policy Committee met a day earlier, the committee received an update from Cal Cities staff Elisa Arcidiacono on the discussion and outcome. She explained that the Public Safety Policy Committee voted to unanimously adopt the proposed statement without any changes.

The committee expressed support for the proposed policy and discussed the importance of increasing access to life-saving medication such as naloxone. Following the discussion, a motion was made to approve the proposed policy, which passed unanimously.

The final proposed statement reads:

Substance Use

Cal Cities supports additional funding and resources to address the substance use crisis through appropriate prevention and intervention efforts, educational awareness campaigns, and increased access to life-saving overdose treatment aids such as naloxone.

VI. **Cal Cities 2023 Strategic Priorities**

The committee was updated on the Cal Cities 2023 Advocacy Priorities. Chair Casillas discussed the results of the League Leaders workshop and explained the process by which these priorities are established. 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.

VII. Adoption of 2023 Work Program

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.

Vice Chair Tillman provided an overview of the survey responses and proposed work program, and allowed for discussion. The committee agreed the work program was broad and encompassed a wide swath of potential issues.

Ultimately, the committee unanimously adopted the following items as their work program:

- Homelessness and behavioral health.
- Parks and access to open space.
- Early learning, child care, and youth programs.

VIII. Budget Update/Legislative Outlook

Cal Cities staff began with a budget update, which provided an overview of the Governor's proposed \$297 billion 2023-24 Budget. The budget did not cut any homelessness funding, rather it maintained funding commitments from prior

budgets. The proposed budget also details new accountability measures for local government for homelessness funding by prioritizing spending on specific programs and requiring adherence to state housing laws.

Lastly, Cal Cities staff provided a legislative outlook, including an overview of potential community services 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 community service bills can be found [here](#).

IX. Committee Discussion

At the end of the meeting, the committee had an open forum opportunity to share feedback about the flow of the meeting and how to ensure the best experience for everyone. Members provided positive feedback on the meeting flow, which will help to inform future meeting agendas.

X. Adjourn

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