



**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY COMMITTEE
HIGHLIGHTS
January 19, 2024**

ATTENDANCE

Members: Illece Buckley Weber (Chair); Max Perrey (Vice Chair); Rosa Acosta; Teresa Acosta; Paul Akinjo; Tess Albin-Smith; Katherine Aleman; Valerie Arkin; Scott Bauer; Paolo Beltran; Kari Birdseye; Bob Branstrom; James Breitling; David Burke; Jennifer Cavanaugh; Margaret Clark; John Freeman; Eric Friedman; Debra Ganes; Kirsten Graham; Miguel Guardado; Derrek Kaff; Dan Kalb; Paige Kaluderovic; Sean Kelleher; Linda Launer; Candice Lee; Sylvia Lemus; Jeff Maloney; Julio Martinez; Deborah McGarrey; Kitty Moore; Jennifer Nakamura; Jeffrey Nibert; Jason Nutt; Stephanie Oddo; Tomas Oliva; Andy Pease; Kelli Pickler; Michael Ponce; Randall Putz; Karina Quintanilla; Gabriel Quinto; Vickie Riddle; Julie Ryan; Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios; Niroop Srivatsa; Dan Stefano; Debby Stegura; Artemio Villegas; Tom Westbrook; Kevin Wilk; Thomas Wong

Cal Cities Partners: Roderick Brewer

Cal Cities Staff: Melissa Sparks-Kranz, Legislative Representative
Zack Cefalu, Legislative Affairs and Policy Analyst

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Illece Buckley Weber welcomed committee members and introduced themselves.

Chair Buckley Weber introduced Carolyn Coleman, Cal Cities Executive Director. Ms. Coleman welcomed everyone to the first policy committee meeting of the year, emphasized the significance of the policy committee's work, and thanked members for their service to all California cities.

Ms. Coleman said that the work of the policy committees is central to Cal Cities advocacy, which is at the heart of the organization. She thanked committee members again for serving on the committee and wished them a great meeting.

Chair Buckley Weber introduced Cal Cities President Daniel Parra who explained that policy committees are vitally important and emphasized the need to protect local governments.

II. Public Comment

Chair Buckley Weber 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,

the Cal Cities advocacy team compiled a [General Briefing Update Document](#), which includes the latest on legislative and budgetary matters affecting cities.

IV. Cal Cities 2024 Advocacy Priorities

Cal Cities staff provided the committee an overview of [Cal Cities 2024 Advocacy Priorities](#). Chair Buckley Weber noted that one of the four 2024 Advocacy Priorities is Climate Change Resiliency and Disaster Preparedness.

V. Existing Policies and Guiding Principles

Cal Cities staff presented changes in the Environmental Quality section of the Existing Policy and Guiding Principles. Staff noted that every two years Cal Cities staff updates our Existing Policy and Guiding Principles based on the position the Policy Committees and Board has taken over those two years on relevant legislation.

The proposed changes were primarily minor and technical in nature and included references to advocacy efforts statewide climate bond funding and supporting forest waste biomass utilization programs. The committee voted in favor (39-1-0) of passing the climate bond funding policy. There was a motion by a member to make several minor amendments to the forest waste biomass utilization programs policy, which was voted on and passed (42-7-2) by the Committee. Cal Cities staff noted that the policy changes will move from the Environmental Quality Policy Committee to the Cal Cities Board of Directors for approval.

VI. Plastic Waste Reduction Implementation Updates

Chair Buckley Weber introduced Vice Chair and Councilmember Max Perrey and City of Mill Valley Climate Coordinator Grace Ledwith to provide an overview presentation of the Reusable Foodware Ordinance passed by the City of Mill Valley. The goal of the ordinance is aimed at reducing single-use plastic materials such as to-go cups, utensils, bags, and other food ware items commonly used. The City established a \$0.25 fee for the use of to-go cups in businesses. This presentation led to a robust discussion among Policy Committee members about balancing environmental regulations and business/economic development of cities.

Cal Cities staff introduced the next guest speaker, StopWaste Executive Director Timothy Burroughs, who presented on SB 54 (2022) – the statewide single use plastic and packaging material recycling law. Mr. Burroughs represents Cal Cities on the SB 54 Advisory Board, facilitated by CalRecycle (the regulatory agency overseeing SB 54 implementation). Mr. Burrough's provided an overview of the SB 54 statutory requirements, including that by 2032 in California 100 percent of single-use packaging and plastic single-use food ware will be recyclable or compostable and that plastic producers are responsible for remitting the local costs of cities and counties implementing these recycling programs. The presentation included opportunities for cities to engage in the upcoming SB 54 rulemaking process.

VII. Adoption of 2024 Work Program

To inform the committee's 2024 work program, committee members were asked to respond to an online survey prior to the meeting, selecting their top priorities for the committee to focus on in the coming year.

Cal Cities staff provided an overview of the survey responses and proposed work program. Chair Buckley Weber facilitated a committee discussion of the survey results. After a discussion of the survey results, the committee agreed the work program was sufficiently representative of the key priority policy issues anticipated for 2024. The committee voted (37-3-1) to support the following policy items as the top three priorities:

- Climate change and resiliency
- Water
- Energy and utilities

Cal Cities staff also noted that the highest priority issues in each of the Environmental Quality topic areas included:

- Air Quality: Wildfire and Air Quality Issues
- CEQA: CEQA Streamlining
- Climate Change and Resiliency: Climate Risk Assessment and Adaptation
- Coastal Issues: Sea Level Rise and Coastal Erosion
- Disaster/Emergency Preparedness: Drought and Flooding/Storm
- Energy/Utilities: Wind and Solar Energy/ Energization
- Hazardous Waste and Remediation: Disposal and Funding
- Solid Waste and Recycling: Plastics and Microplastics
- Water: Groundwater Management

VIII. 2024 Legislative Bill and Budget Update

Chair Buckley Weber introduced Cal Cities staff to provide a 2024 legislative bill and budget update, including providing a summary of the current legislative and regulatory landscape and what emerging policies are being forecasted.

Cal Cities staff provided an update on the budget deficit, the Governor's January Budget Proposal, and the current legislative climate bond proposals. Staff provided anticipate legislation to reform SB 1383 (2016) based on the 2023 [Little Hoover Commission Report](#), as well as forthcoming legislation on clean energy topics. Cal Cities staff provided an update on regulatory rulemakings including [long-term water conservation draft regulations](#), the [forthcoming SB 54 \(2022\) regulation](#) process, and sea level rise guidance anticipated for 2024.

IX. Adjourn

Chair Buckley Weber and Vice-Chair Perrey thanked the committee for their hard work and provided some closing remarks. Chair Buckley Weber adjourned the committee meeting.

Next Meeting: In Person, Friday, March 22, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Marriott Burbank Airport Hotel, 2500 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank