

REPORT

COUNTY ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES



CEAC'S PURPOSE

THE COUNTY ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA (CEAC), FORMED IN 1914, is comprised of county engineers, public works directors, county road commissioners, and professional personnel throughout California's 58 counties. Its purpose is "To advance county engineering and management by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas and information aimed at improving service to the public."

FURTHERMORE, THE OBJECTIVE OF CEAC, IS "To accomplish the advancement of engineering methods and ethical practice through networking efforts of all 58 counties in the state." Through discussion, interchange, and dissemination of engineering and administrative data/ideas, the organization shall strive to affect "maximum efficiency and modernization in engineering and administrative units of local government."

THROUGHOUT CEAC'S HISTORY, it has maintained a close relationship with the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) to lend support in policy development and advocacy efforts, thus benefiting counties and their ability to serve their residents.

FRONT COVER PHOTO: HAMNER BRIDGE, RIVERSIDE COUNTY.

PAGE 1 PHOTO: SPREADING GROUNDS FOR PIRU GROUNDWATER BASIN, VENTURA COUNTY.

PAGE 2 PHOTO: MIDWAY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, BUTTE COUNTY.

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Message
from the
2020-2021
President
of the County
Engineers
Association
of California



For possibly the first time since 1995, when CEAC Vice President Doug Wilson served out the remainder of CEAC President John Mitchell's term, our Annual Report includes a Vice President's message. A key difference is that while Jim Porter, our 2021 CEAC President, may have stepped away from the President's chair due to his retirement from San Mateo County and losing strict eligibility as a CEAC Principal Member, he has accepted the position of Fellowship Committee Vice-Chair in his new role as a CEAC Affiliate. Jim's service and example to me will always be appreciated. He served for four years as a CEAC officer (2017 to 2020), and then returned to serve a second term as President, although that term was cut a little short.

It has been said that Rick Tippet, our 2021 CEAC Immediate Past President, was the "virtual president" having served his term entirely during the COVID-19 pandemic. If that is the case, then I have been the "virtual vice president" or, worse yet, the "virtual vice president/acting president." The COVID pandemic has disrupted many of our comfortable routines, and CEAC has had to adapt to that change.

I believe CEAC has risen to the challenge. We have continued to meet and conduct association business; our six policy committees have fulfilled their duties in assisting CSAC staff in shaping legislation on behalf of California's counties utilizing virtual meetings and communication over email.

Flood Control and Water Resources Policy Committee lined up great speakers to discuss flood plain program changes and grant funding opportunities from the Department of Water Resources and CalOES/FEMA Hazard Mitigation.

Our newly rebranded Infrastructure and Development Policy Committee diligently reviewed and helped CSAC advocate for changes to Board of Forestry Rulemaking regarding "State Minimum Fire Safe Standards" and the Public Utilities Commission's Rule 20 Electrical Undergrounding program.

A primary focus of the Surveyor Policy Committee's work is influencing disaster responders to invest in the preservation of survey monuments after wildfires, when many laws and requirements are suspended.

The Resource Recovery and Waste Management Policy Committee, as well as other departments across all 58 counties, have been consumed by SB 1383 (2016). This sweeping law brings many new requirements and programs to county governments. We will all be updating our procurement policies, establishing inspection and enforcement procedures pertaining to edible food recovery, and passing new county ordinances on Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCP), such as organic waste methane emissions reductions.

The Administrative Committee continues to do a lot of shared learning around our COVID-19 responses (telework and returning to the office). The Committee also covers issues that do not necessarily fit into a traditional Public Works technical agenda, but which we all need to be aware of, such as CARB Fleet and ZEV Regulations, or proposals affecting Public Contracting.

Finally, the CEAC Policy Committee with the largest attendance – Transportation – spent most of their time working towards legislative outreach to support more federal and state

transportation funding, as reauthorization was under consideration at the federal level and CSAC pursued budget surplus funding for transportation in California. Transportation Policy Committee Members also represent CEAC on seventeen statewide committees with city and state partners. The Committee is fundamental for California county engineers who are most often their county's road commissioners and maintain what is arguably every county's largest asset: their county-maintained road system. The Transportation Committee continues to support the "California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment," for which the 2020 report was completed and released this year.

To conclude, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to CEAC for the opportunity of serving on the governing board as Secretary, then Vice President. I have been a member of CEAC since 2005 and have greatly benefited from networking and collaborating with colleagues across the state. It is an honor to be a part of the leadership of our association. I hope during my time as president next year we can promote our mission and increase attendance, because any county public works professional out there who doesn't engage with us is missing out on a valuable resource.

Howard N. Dashiell
2021 CEAC Vice President



PAGE 3 PHOTO: NEW COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING BOARD ROOM, CONTRA COSTA COUNTY.

PAGE 4 PHOTO: SANTA FE BRIDGE OVER THE TUOLUMNE RIVER SEISMIC REPLACEMENT PROJECT, RIBBON CUTTING. L TO R SUPERVISOR BUCK CONDIT – D1, ROSA PARK DELEON – STANCOG EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SUPERVISOR MANNY GREWAL – D4, SUPERVISOR CHANNCE CONDIT – D5, SUPERVISOR VITO CHIESA – D2, CONGRESSMAN JOSH HARDER – 10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT – DAVID LEAMON – PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR STANISLAUS COUNTY

Reflecting on 2021

The 2021 legislative session brought continued challenges with COVID-restrictions, remote testimony, and an ever-changing environment at the State Capitol.

Despite this uncertainty and a desire to return to a sense of normalcy, CSAC staff and our public works partners from CEAC were prepared to continue our steadfast push for resources to respond to the pandemic and to lead the way on advocating for other needed investments. The resulting political, budget, and pandemic-altered landscape in 2021 produced unique opportunities that enabled the CEAC and CSAC team to secure historic investments for top county priorities.

The budget remained the key focus for CSAC staff as the state managed an unprecedented one-time surplus as well as significant allocations of federal relief funding. County advocacy advanced funding for broadband, wildfire resilience, county health and human services, infrastructure, and funding to implement state regulatory mandates. In the regulatory arena, it was full steam ahead for the Board of Forestry as they deliberated their revised Fire Safe Regulations and the California Public Utilities Commission continued its effort to overhaul electrical undergrounding, among other key regulations.

In the transportation infrastructure arena, CSAC worked with CEAC membership to advocate for temporary relief from the SB 1 (Beall, 2017) Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement for local government Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account Funding for jurisdictions whose revenues were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. CEAC and CSAC members also pushed for allocations of federal relief funding for local transportation infrastructure, culminating in over \$350 million in subvention funds to for local and regional projects and \$23.5 million from the Highway Infrastructure Program for local bridge projects.

Through another difficult wildfire year, the CEAC and CSAC team worked diligently on wildfire funding



and legislation. Our teams fought to allocate all fire prevention funding before the Legislature completed its work and pushed for ongoing funding for prevention, resulting in a first-ever \$200 million continuous appropriation of funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund towards wildfire prevention. County advocacy was also vital in passing AB 9 (Wood) which, makes permanent the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program with the goal of increasing regional capacity to create fire-adapted communities and landscapes which provides support and funding beyond capital expenditures for regional wildfire collaboratives.

In the infrastructure and development policy area, CSAC collaborated with CEAC members to protect county authority to recover costs of infrastructure required by new development through impact fees and successfully advocated for an additional \$250 million in state funding for the Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG) Program of 2019, including a \$90 million set-aside and flexible infill definition to facilitate projects in small and rural jurisdictions.

Collaboration and perseverance led to unprecedented action for organic waste regulatory implementation, including regulatory relief and dedicated funding. Advocacy by counties throughout the year resulted in administrative civil penalty relief and an unprecedented \$170 million for implementation of organic waste recycling and infrastructure development, with \$60 million dedicated solely to local governments. Recycling and waste bills dominated much of the legislative work of our Sacramento team with multiple wins for “truth in labeling” requirements.

The following sections highlight the important legislative, budget, and regulatory advocacy that CSAC undertook on behalf of counties and our public works partners within CEAC during this second pandemic year. As always, this work would not be possible without CSAC’s longstanding partnership with CEAC and the ongoing leadership, commitment and expertise provided by its resolute public works leaders from around the state. ▲



PAGE 5 PHOTOS:
AUGUST COMPLEX FIRE SURVEY, TRINITY COUNTY (TOP);
JONES VALLEY SLIDE, SHASTA COUNTY (BOTTOM);
PAGE 6 PHOTOS:
ROAD RESURFACING, SAN DIEGO COUNTY (LEFT);
BADLANDS LANDFILL, RIVERSIDE COUNTY (TOP RIGHT);
MLK BUILDING SITEWORK, LOS ANGELES COUNTY
(BOTTOM RIGHT).



Transportation



State and Federal Transportation Funding and COVID Relief

CSAC and CEAC engaged in several efforts to provide relief for transportation budgets that continued to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. The federal government made funding available for transportation infrastructure to address state and local funding shortfalls, and at the state level the Governor and Legislature provided temporary relief from SB 1 maintenance of effort requirements for counties whose revenues have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. CSAC and CEAC have also been immersed in discussions around the allocation of federal funding to regions and local governments and actively worked to ensure that relief was provided to local agencies that experienced funding gaps as a result of the pandemic.

CSAC, with engagement and input from CEAC, pushed for allocations of federal relief funding for local transportation infrastructure at the start of the year. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 (CRRSSA) made funding available to states for transportation infrastructure in order to fill the gap in funding resulting from reductions in local transportation revenues due to the COVID-19 pandemic. California received roughly \$912 million in CRRSSA funds, 40 percent of which will be apportioned to regional transportation agencies for local and regional projects. CSAC was successful in securing one-time funding in the amount of \$23.5 million from the Highway Infrastructure Program for local bridge projects.

At the state level, CSAC began discussions in 2020 with state agencies and local government partners seeking temporary relief for local agencies that have experienced funding gaps

due to the pandemic. CSAC advocated to the California Transportation Commission, Newsom Administration, and Legislature for temporary relief from the SB 1 (Beall, 2017) Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement for local government Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account Funding for jurisdictions whose revenues have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. AB 149 (Committee on Budget, 2021), the transportation budget trailer bill, offers temporary and proportionate reductions in local MOEs based on revenue reductions. AB 149 waives the MOE requirement for 2019-20. It also offers proportionate reductions in local MOEs based on revenue reductions in taxable sales from previous years for two years. For 2021-22, a jurisdiction where Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue is greater than Sales and Use Tax revenue may petition the Controller to use TOT as the basis for the MOE reduction calculation.

In addition to advocating for transportation infrastructure funding and relief, CSAC also worked closely with county, city, and regional agency representatives to release the 2020 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment Report (Needs Assessment). The Needs Assessment is a comprehensive analysis of California's local roads and bridges and includes essential components like sidewalks, bike lanes, signals, and storm drains. The first comprehensive statewide study of California's local street and road system was completed in 2008, providing critical analysis and information on the local transportation network's condition and funding needs and supporting local government advocacy that ultimately resulted in the passage of SB 1 (2017).

With guidance from the Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment Oversight Committee, CSAC, the League of California Cities and our regional partners released the latest edition of the report in August 2021. The report was the first statewide analysis of the impacts of SB 1 on local streets and roads. It also included an enhanced analysis of local bridge funding needs, which is intended to provide valuable information to help counties advocate for a fair share of transportation infrastructure funding. The bridge component of the Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment is of particular importance this year, as we've worked to advocate for the federal and state investments in local bridge needs.





Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure

CSAC, with input from CEAC members and county supervisors, was very engaged in the development of the California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CAPTI), which was adopted in July 2021. The CAPTI is designed to implement the Governor's Climate Change Executive Order (N-19-19) and describes CalSTA's draft plans to invest discretionary transportation funds to address climate change and promote public health, safety, and equity. CSAC was engaged in and provided feedback to CalSTA during the public outreach process for the development of this report.

CSAC strongly advocated for a balanced transportation policy with continued investment of state and federal funding for maintenance and rehabilitation of local roadways and bridges as part of a broader climate change strategy. Effective asset management and a fix-it-first approach can reduce the lifecycle carbon emissions associated with local roads and bridges, as well

as make funding available for broader transportation priorities. Out comments also recognized the need to promote alternatives to driving by improving state and local roadways to add safe access for transit, bicycles, and pedestrians where feasible and appropriate. At the same time, CSAC expressed support for transportation investments that facilitate interregional travel and goods movement, especially in parts of the state that are growing more rapidly. CSAC will continue to monitor the implementation of the CAPTI in the upcoming year.



PAGE 7 PHOTOS:
 VARNER ROAD RESURFACE,
 RIVERSIDE COUNTY (TOP);
 HICKMAN ROAD BRIDGE
 RIBBON CUTTING,
 STANISLAUS COUNTY
 (BOTTOM).
 PAGE 8 PHOTOS:
 OLIVE VIEW MEDICAL
 CENTER, LOS ANGELES
 COUNTY (TOP);
 EL CENTRO WAY SIDEWALK,
 RIVERSIDE COUNTY (RIGHT);
 WALERGA ROAD BRIDGE,
 PLACER COUNTY (BOTTOM).

Transportation Legislation

CSAC solicited technical assistance from CEAC in advocating on several transportation bills introduced this year. Early in the year, legislators attempted to move major legislation that would have had a significant impact to county flexibility and revenues. Over the course of the legislative session, CSAC worked with legislators and other stakeholders to amend these measures to address concerns and advance county priorities.

Regional Transportation Planning and SB 375. In the Spring, legislators introduced three significant regional transportation and land use planning bills that would have updated and changed the requirements set forth by SB 375 (Chapter 28, Statutes of 2008). These bills were SB 261 by Senator Allen, SB 475 by Senator Cortese, and AB 1147 by Assemblymember Friedman. In their original form, each of these bills would have had significant implications for the use of state and federal transportation funds in California's 18 metropolitan planning agencies, as well as changes to county land use authority.

CSAC staff quickly engaged legislators on each of the three bills. We joined transportation and development interest groups, regional agencies, and cities in opposing SB 261, which would've amended SB 375 to include an explicit vehicle miles traveled reduction target in place of the greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets currently included in SB 375. SB 261 and SB 475 did not advance from the Senate Transportation Committee in 2021.

CSAC worked closely with the author to secure amendments to AB 1147. The bill was ultimately vetoed but would have made substantive changes to the required elements of metropolitan planning organizations' regional transportation plans and required a consultation process when local agencies take any action in conflict with the regional plan. CSAC remained neutral on this measure after securing amendments to change the scope and process for the regional consultation, among other changes.



AB 1035 (Salas): Streets and Highways – Recycled Materials.

CSAC relied on the technical expertise of public works directors this year to develop amendments to address our key concerns with AB 1035 (Salas), which would have required local agencies to apply standard specifications that allow for the use of recycled materials at or above the level allowed in the California Department of Transportation's most recently published standard specifications. Ultimately, the author addressed our concerns after accepting amendments that removed a link to state funding eligibility; applied the bill only to Caltrans' 2018 specifications, rather than also applying to any future specifications; and allowing local agencies flexibility if they find that a specification is not feasible or cost effective. These changes allowed CSAC to move to a neutral position, but AB 1035 was ultimately vetoed by the Governor over local mandate concerns.

AB 43 (Friedman): Traffic Safety. In addition to securing amendments to bills that we had concerns with, CSAC also strongly advocated in support of AB 43 (Friedman), which grants the California Department of Transportation and local authorities greater flexibility in setting speed limits based on recommendations included in the January 2020 report prepared by the California State Transportation. One of CEAC's policy and legislative priorities is to identify opportunities to reduce traffic-related fatalities and injuries by promoting vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety. AB 43 will allow local agencies to set speed limits based on safety-related factors and contribute to a reduction in traffic-related injuries and fatalities. AB 43 was signed by the Governor. ▲



NATIONAL TRAILS HIGHWAY CHIP SEAL, SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY (TOP);
CROWS LANDING COLD IN-PLACE RECYCLING, STANISLAUS COUNTY (BOTTOM).

Flood Control and Water Resources Management

Throughout this extreme drought year, CSAC remained in close contact with leadership within the Natural Resources Agency, Department of Water Resources (DWR), and State Water Resources Control Board.

As conditions continued to worsen throughout the state, CSAC pushed for funding and assistance to all communities, and especially those most impacted by drought. In October, California Disaster Assistance Aid funding was released for health and safety issues, in addition to significant emergency funding through the adopted budget. However, as droughts come, floods follow and CSAC and CEAC have been engaged at the state and county level raising awareness about floods, post-wildfire debris flows, and climate impacted flooding.

Drought Reporting

SB 552 (Hertzberg) enacts many of the recommendations of the County Drought Advisory Group report from DWR including to develop a drought plan and drought task force (or alternative to achieve the same goal). The bill was amended in the second house to require counties to include a question about dry wells in a new well permit application and to report information on dry and failing wells to relevant groundwater sustainability agencies and to the Department of Water Resources. Counties pushed back on this, and amendments were taken at CSAC's request remove requirements for county well reporting.

Drought Contract Relief

This year's budget included a number of drought-related grant and support programs, including some guidelines for the declaration of a drought scenario. Separate from an emergency declaration, the drought scenario provides temporary flexibility,



until January 1, 2024, and ties to state and local assistance funding in the budget. The eligible interim relief covers hauled water, temporary community water tanks, bottled water, water vending machines, emergency water interties, new wells or rehabilitation of existing wells, construction of connections to adjacent water systems, recycled water projects, or other projects that provide immediate drought response, and fish and wildlife protection. A drought scenario may be called by the Governor or State Water Board with notice to the Legislature and relevant state emergency and natural resources agencies.

Water Debt Arrearages—Including Wastewater

As part of a \$1 billion federal relief program, the 2021-22 budget gives guidance to the State Water Board on how to distribute relief funding to reduce customer water bills as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, and to support local water agencies. This funding covers water debt from residential and commercial customers accrued between March 4, 2020, and June 15, 2021, if that customer is 60 days or more behind on their payments. For counties that maintain wastewater systems, if there are excess funds after the initial disbursement period which lasts through January 2022, the remaining funds are required to cover wastewater debt with disbursement beginning no later than February 1, 2022. ▲



Infrastructure and Development

Infrastructure Funding to Support Housing Development

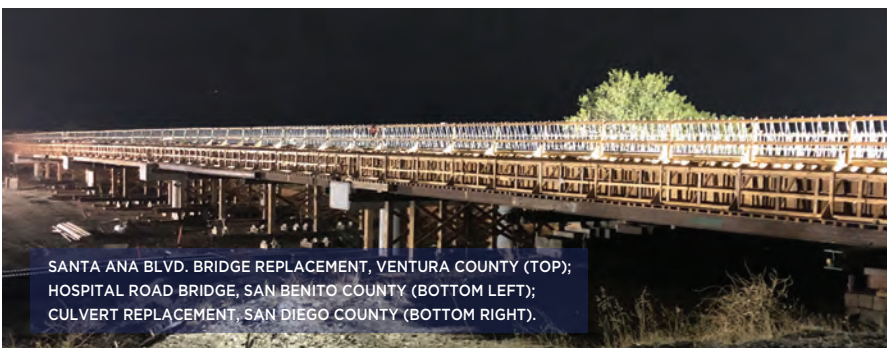
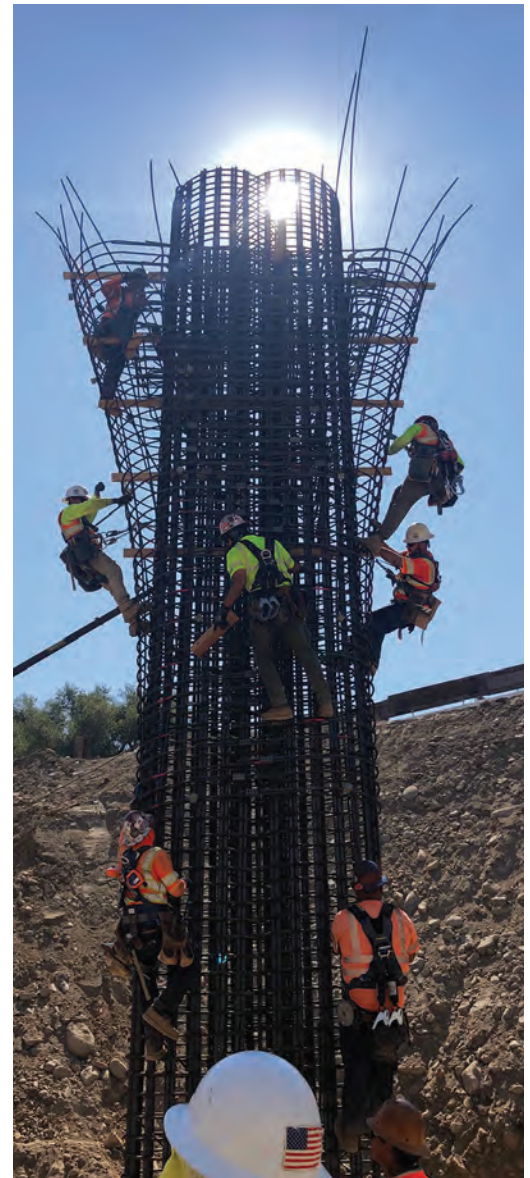
One of CEAC's top policy and legislative priorities is to support efforts to fund infill infrastructure in tandem with affordable housing development. This year, CSAC successfully advocated for additional state funding for the Infill Infrastructure Grant (IIG) Program of 2019, which was included in AB 140 (Committee on Budget), the housing budget trailer bill. The IIG program promotes infill housing development and funds infrastructure improvements necessary to support housing development.

AB 140 includes \$250 million for the IIG program. It allocates \$160 million of those funds for selected capital improvement projects for large jurisdictions. To ensure that all types of communities can benefit from this funding, CSAC worked with RCRC and the California Coalition for Rural Housing to include a \$90 million set-aside for over-the-counter grants for capital improvement projects for counties under 250,000 population and the cities located within those counties as well as a flexible definition of infill to facilitate projects in small and rural jurisdictions.

Residential Development Impact Fees

Legislators revisited development impact fee legislation in 2021—a topic that they have been exploring for several years. CEAC members provided valuable input over multiple legislative session as CSAC and our partners negotiated many concessions in the bill that ultimately became AB 602 (Grayson). CSAC also successfully opposed three bills that would have severely limited fee authority, created new opportunities for legal challenges, or created state-mandated impact fee caps.

AB 602 was signed by the Governor and imposes significant changes to residential impact fee nexus study requirements. Specifically, it requires local governments to update their nexus studies used to justify certain impact fees at least once every eight years; requires jurisdictions to base fee calculations on the square footage of individual residential units, unless the jurisdiction demonstrates that another metric is more appropriate; and requires counties with populations of at least 250,000 to integrate capital improvement planning with fee nexus studies.



SANTA ANA BLVD. BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, VENTURA COUNTY (TOP);
HOSPITAL ROAD BRIDGE, SAN BENITO COUNTY (BOTTOM LEFT);
CULVERT REPLACEMENT, SAN DIEGO COUNTY (BOTTOM RIGHT).




Rule 20 Utility Undergrounding Tariff Program

CSAC has remained involved in the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) R.17-05-010 proceeding to consider changes to the Electric Tariff Rule 20, which provides utility ratepayer funding to relocate overhead electrical lines underground. CSAC has continued to work with the CEAC Infrastructure and Development Committee to guide our advocacy during the proceeding and has filed and served comments in response to the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) subsequent rulings for revisions to the Rule 20 program.

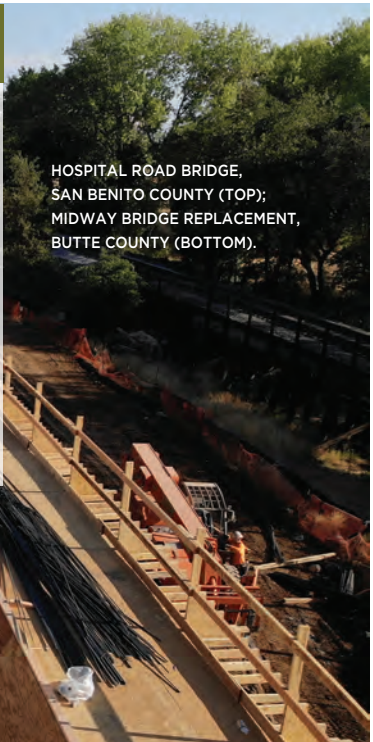
In early 2020, the CPUC proposed to sunset the Rule 20A program which many counties use to underground their electric facilities in an accelerated manner. Over the past year and a half, CSAC has leaned on the technical expertise of public works directors and played a key role in advocating against the CPUC's original proposal to eliminate the program. Based on feedback from public works experts around the state, CSAC expressed support for refining and expanding the public interest criteria for Rule 20A projects and maintaining the core components of the program, while opposing elimination of Rule 20A.

In April 2021, the CPUC issued the Proposed Phase 1 Decision, which it later slightly revised and ultimately approved in June 2021. The approved Phase 1 Decision revised Electric Rule 20 by discontinuing new work credit allocations for Electric Rule 20A projects after December 2022, clarified Electric Rule 20A project eligibility criteria and work credit transfer rules, and enhanced program oversight. The approved Phase 1 Decision states that the CPUC declines to sunset the Rule 20A program or modify the Rule 20B or 20C programs.

In a subsequent Phase 2 of this proceeding, the CPUC will determine whether to further modify the Rule 20A program to support projects located in underserved or disadvantaged communities. To resolve some of the remaining issues raised by CSAC and other stakeholders, the CPUC extended the deadline to consider additional changes to the Electric Rule 20 program by one year and intends to address some of the remaining concerns in Phase 2 of the proceeding. CSAC has relied on feedback from public works directors to shape the formal comments we have submitted to the CPUC and has been a key voice for local government in these discussions. ▲



Surveying



It was a relatively quiet legislative year for surveyor-related bills. SB 414 (Jones), which was supported by the California Land Surveyors Association, makes largely technical changes to surveying laws. Specifically, the bill extends the time for appeals of local decisions concerning tentative maps from 30 days after request for hearing to 45 days. ▲

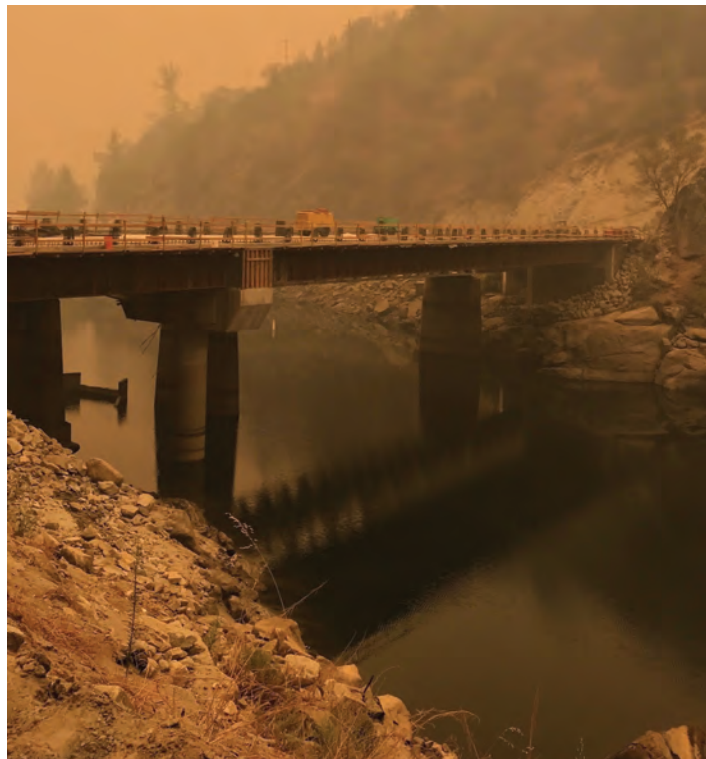
HOSPITAL ROAD BRIDGE,
SAN BENITO COUNTY (TOP);
MIDWAY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT,
BUTTE COUNTY (BOTTOM).

Wildfire Recovery and Resiliency

Through another difficult wildfire year, CSAC worked diligently on wildfire funding and legislation. CSAC fought to allocate all fire prevention funding before the Legislature adjourned for the year, and pushed for ongoing funding for prevention.

After a challenging June budget, where funding was put off or subject to a determination of need, August saw a reversal of this action along with a first-ever \$200 million continuous appropriation of funding from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund towards wildfire prevention. These funding wins were two key bills that CSAC worked on.

CSAC moved quickly to stop SB 55 (Stern), which would have prohibited all development in the State Responsibility Area and Very High Fire Severity Zones. While counties support reasonable development mitigation in fire areas, this bill would have set a new precedent for building moratoriums without consideration for the differences in county land use and ownership. In contrast, local governments made a strong push for AB 9 (Wood) which was signed into law and makes permanent the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program with the goal of increasing regional capacity to create fire-adapted communities and landscapes which provides support and funding beyond capital expenditures for regional wildfire collaboratives. CSAC and CEAC are also actively engaged on the Board of Forestry's Fire Safe Regulations, which, if implemented, would have severe consequences on county roads and development. ▲



ITALIAN BAR BRIDGE DURING CREEK FIRE, FRESNO COUNTY (TOP); AUGUST COMPLEX FIRE SURVEY, TRINITY COUNTY (BOTTOM LEFT); CLEARING VEGETATION, NEVADA COUNTY (BOTTOM RIGHT).



Resource Recovery and Waste Management

Organic Waste—Funding and Regulatory Relief

This year, good collaboration and a lot of perseverance led to unprecedented action for organic waste regulatory implementation. At the beginning of the year, CSAC, CEAC, and our local government partners established a focused approach to support local governments with the implementation of SB 1383's organic waste diversion rules, through both a pathway to regulatory relief and dedicated funding. Not without controversy, the team steadfastly negotiated throughout the year resulting in administrative civil penalty relief for the 2022 calendar year. Leveraging our work on the policy side, we were able to secure an unprecedented \$170 million for implementation of organic waste recycling and infrastructure development, with \$60 million dedicated solely to local governments.

MECCA LANDFILL CLOSURE, RIVERSIDE COUNTY.

Recycling, Waste Recovery, and Truth in Labeling

Recycling and waste bills dominated much of the work of our team with strong finishes in “truth in labeling” requirement bills signed in to law. SB 343 (Allen) will prohibit the use of the “chasing arrows” logo on non-recyclable products. AB 818 (Bloom) similarly establishes labeling requirements for non-flushable wet wipes. Together these bills will reduce inputs into recycling and wastewater infrastructure, saving counties time, funding, and effort as they manage the waste stream. CSAC also advocated to continue the exemption program for treated wood waste (TWW). AB 322 (Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials) facilitates the safe and proper handling and disposal of TWW by codifying the alternative Management Standards that sunset on January 1, 2021. By closing this loophole, counties have one less product that could end up in roadside or illegal dumping areas. ▲



Federal Affairs

CSAC's federal policy advocates, Paragon Government Relations, describe below the status of a number of federal issues of importance to CEAC.

Amid a highly partisan environment on Capitol Hill, President Joe Biden and Democratic congressional leaders secured narrow passage of two historic pieces of legislation during the 2021 session – the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA; P.L. 117-2) and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; P.L. 117-58). Another bill of major economic consequence – the Build Back Better Act (BBBA; H.R. 5376) – was pending at the time of this writing.

Working closely with our federal advocates and CEAC members, CSAC accomplished a number of important policy objectives in 2021, including approval of a new long-term surface transportation reauthorization measure. The association also successfully advocated for counties to receive direct COVID-19-relief funding through ARPA. All told, California's counties are receiving over \$7.7 billion in federal pandemic-related aid via the Department of the Treasury's Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, which can be used for a variety of purposes, including water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) / FAST Act Reauthorization

On November 15, President Biden signed a massive infrastructure investment package (IIJA) into law. The Act includes a five-year, \$383.4 billion surface transportation reauthorization measure, as well as significant funding for broadband, water, rail, aviation, resiliency, electric vehicles, and grid infrastructure. In total, the IIJA will provide \$550 billion in new spending over five years, and approximately \$1.2 trillion over an eight-year timeframe.

Surface Transportation (Select Highlights)

In a major victory for California's counties, the IIJA authorizes over \$40 billion for a new Bridge Investment Program (BIP). Under the Act, \$27.5 billion will be directed to states via formula, with the remainder of the funds available to states and local agencies on a competitive basis. For its part, California is expected to receive more than \$4.2 billion in formula funding to help fix and replace deficient bridges. Notably, the Act specifies that 15 percent of BIP formula funds must be reserved for local off-system bridge projects at 100 percent federal cost share. In addition, the new infrastructure law increases the amount of

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds that are set aside for off-system bridges (equal to 20 percent of a state's FY 2009 share of Highway Bridge Program funding).

The IIJA also provides billions of dollars for key discretionary grant programs under the purview of the U.S. Department of Transportation, including RAISE Grants, which support projects of significant local or regional impact, and the INFRA Grant Program, which funds highway and rail projects of regional or national economic significance. Additionally, the IIJA creates several new competitive grant programs of direct interest to California's counties, including the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program, the National Infrastructure Project Assistance Grant Program, the Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program, and the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program.

Broadband

The federal infrastructure law includes a total of \$65 billion in funding for broadband planning and deployment, including nearly \$42.5 billion for a new last-mile infrastructure program known as the Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) initiative. Under the program, states will make competitive grants to entities for broadband infrastructure, data collection, and mapping projects. Pursuant to the IIJA, each state will receive a minimum of \$100 million, with the remaining funds allocated based on each state's relative number of unserved and high-cost locations. All qualifying projects will need to meet a minimum download/upload standard of 100/20 megabits per second. In order to increase broadband affordability, all grant recipients will be required to offer at least one low-cost plan option.

The IIJA also includes \$1 billion for the construction, improvement or acquisition of middle-mile infrastructure, as well as funding for a wide variety of digital equity and capacity initiatives.

FEMA/Resiliency

The infrastructure law provides \$1 billion for FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program. The Act also provides \$500 million for a new program within FEMA that will help states establish revolving loan funds that can be used by counties to carry out mitigation projects that reduce natural disaster risk. Additionally, the IIJA modifies the Stafford Act to expand eligibilities within the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to include the replacement or installation of wildfire resilient electrical transmissions or utility poles.

Wildfire Risk Reduction

The IIJA authorizes nearly \$3.4 billion for the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service to conduct various forest management activities, including hazardous fuels reduction,

controlled burns, community wildfire defense grants, landscape forest restoration projects, and additional firefighting resources. In addition, the Act includes \$5 billion for utilities to bury power lines and install fire-resistant technologies to reduce wildfires.

Water Infrastructure

The Act provides \$55 billion for water infrastructure investments via the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds. Additionally, the law provides a total of \$8.3 billion for Western water infrastructure, including: \$3.2 billion to address aging infrastructure; \$1.15 billion for water storage and conveyance projects; \$1 billion for water recycling; \$1 billion for rural water investments; \$500 million for dam safety; and, \$250 million for desalination. The bill also includes \$300 million for the Drought Contingency Plan.

Disaster Assistance

In 2021, House lawmakers advanced several bills designed to improve FEMA disaster response and recovery. For starters, the chamber cleared legislation – known as the Hazard Eligibility and Local Projects (HELP) Act (H.R. 1917) – that would allow applicants for FEMA's pre-disaster hazard, hazard, and flood mitigation grant programs to begin work on projects before federal funds are awarded. Under current practice, state and local agencies cannot begin projects until FEMA formally makes an award. In fact, purchasing land or starting construction would disqualify a project.

The House also gave the green light to the Preliminary Damage Assessment Improvement Act of 2021 (H.R. 3709), which would require FEMA to assess and seek recommendations on improving its preliminary damage assessment process. Specifically, H.R. 3709 would direct FEMA to submit a report to Congress that includes information on the process for deploying federal staff to support preliminary disaster assessments, the number of staff, and details on their training and experience. The agency also would be required to convene an advisory panel to make recommendations to improve the components of the preliminary assessment process. Among other things, the panel would have to consider establishing a training regime to ensure preliminary damage assessments are made using consistent guidelines.

Across Capitol Hill, Senator Alex Padilla introduced a package of Stafford Act reforms that are intended to make the law work better for wildfire disasters. The senator's proposal is split into two measures (S. 3092 and S. 3093). The first bill – the FEMA Cost Share Equity and Fairness Act – would increase the federal cost-share to 90 percent (up from the current level of 75 percent) for communities that have experienced multiple disasters in a short period of time. The bill also would increase the federal cost-

share for emergency food delivery, as well as for underserved communities.

The second measure – the FEMA Improvement, Reform, and Efficiency (FIRE) Act – would allow FEMA to explore ways to pre-deploy resources during a red flag warning and would require the agency to defer to a state on areas where a state can provide the necessary services in half the time of the comparable federal solution. It should be noted that this is in direct response to delays in FEMA housing assistance following recent California wildfires. The bill also would make relocation assistance available if it can be demonstrated that a structure is at risk of future damage.

In addition, the measure would direct FEMA and the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study on potential solutions to address the availability and affordability of wildfire insurance. This study would be the first step in pursuing some form of federal insurance program for wildfires, similar to the National Flood Insurance Program. A separate study is geared toward improving how the agency provides housing assistance after a disaster, while a third study would examine potential gaps in wildfire disaster response.

Public Lands

In a victory for California's forest counties, the IIJA reauthorizes the Secure Rural Schools (SRS) program for an additional three years. Under the Act, SRS funding will increase to FY 2017 funding levels, resulting in a roughly \$60 million annual program boost compared to the FY 2020 payment level.

With regard to the Payments-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT) program, the Department of the Interior in June of 2021 distributed approximately \$529 million in PILT funds (up from \$517 million in 2020) to over 1,900 local governments. Although Congress has not yet finalized a full-year budget for FY 2022, the House has endorsed an additional year of full funding for PILT as part of its Interior spending bill (H.R. 4502).

Finally, and of additional importance to California's public lands counties, ARPA created a new Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund that will provide \$1.5 billion over two years to revenue sharing counties (defined as counties that receive PILT and SRS payments). Notably, the Treasury Department is charged with determining the formula that will be used to distribute funds to public lands counties. In developing the formula, the Department is required to take into consideration the economic conditions of each eligible county using measurements of poverty rates, household income, land values, unemployment rates, and other economic indicators. Eligible counties may use the funds for any governmental purpose, except for a lobbying activity. ▲

CEAC Program Update

Similar to 2020, 2021 was another unusual year. CEAC continued to thrive as an association thanks in large part to online technology, membership engagement, and CEAC's leadership.

While most meetings were held virtually, we were fortunate to have an in-person conference with our county supervisors at the CSAC 127th Annual Meeting in Monterey. In 2021, CEAC continued to develop the CEAC forum; an online platform designed to share questions and ideas amongst the various policy committee areas.

Conferences

Originally scheduled to host the National Association of County Engineers' conference in Palm Springs, CEAC shifted course when the conference was moved to a virtual format due to the pandemic, and instead, held a modified virtual Spring Conference in May. The Policy Conference was also held in a virtual format. For the first time since 2019, the Annual Meeting was held in person in Monterey. The Northern California Bedrock Conference was cancelled in 2021, and unfortunately, Camp Conery, the longtime conference site was destroyed in the 2021 Dixie wildfire. CEAC appreciates our affiliates, particularly during the past two years, and would especially like to recognize our Annual Platinum Sponsors: Dewberry Drake Haglan, Dokken Engineering, MGE Engineering, NCE, Quincy Engineering, Transtech, Willdan Engineering, and Wood Rodgers. CEAC would also like to acknowledge our additional conference sponsors: AECOM, Ardurra Group, BSK Associates, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Michael Baker International, NV5, Psomas, TRC Engineers and Unico Engineering.

Awards

The Buffalo Bull award was given to Tom Mattson, Public Works Director, Humboldt County; Howard Dashiell, Director, Department of Transportation, Mendocino County received the Engineer of the Year award; and Joe Morris, Deputy County Surveyor, San Luis Obispo County received the Surveyor of the Year award. The CHICS (California's Honorable Intrepid Sisters) Golden Egg Award was given to George Johnson, Riverside County, and CEAC posthumously awarded the Buddy Award to



Delores Sadjadi, wife of CEAC Treasurer Emeritus Mehdi Sadjadi, Marin County, who passed away in April 2020.

We celebrated our seventh year recognizing California's cities and counties with the Outstanding Local Streets and Roads Project Awards. Placer County was the winner in the Efficient and Sustainable Bridge Maintenance, Construction and Reconstruction category for their "Bowman Road Bridges Rehabilitation" project, and three counties received honorable mentions in various categories, including Ventura County, "Yerba Buena Road Improvements--Challenges at Every Turn!"; Fresno County, "Italian Bar Road Bridge Replacement"; and Riverside County for their "Temescal Canyon Road Widening Project - Dawson Canyon and Dos Lagos Segments."

Membership

Similar to recent years, 2021 proved to be a year full of changes in county public works leadership. New appointments and changes included: Josh Pack, Public Works Director, Butte County; Robert Pachinger, Public Works Director, Calaveras County; Dominic Tyburski, Public Works Director, Kings County; Rosemarie Gaglione, Public Works Director, Marin County; Tom Bonigut, Chief of Public Works, Monterey County; John Mannle, Public Works Director, Plumas County; Brendon Briggs, Public Works Director, San Bernardino County; John Diodati, Public Works Director, San Luis Obispo County; and Dan Peterson, Public Works Director, Yuba County.

Some notable retirements included Jim Porter, San Mateo County; Tim Goncharoff, Santa Cruz County; Rick Tippet, Trinity County; and Peter Rei, Tuolumne County. And sadly, CEAC lost four longtime members in 2021 including Clay Castleberry, Butte County; Maurice Shiu, Contra Costa County; Bob Perreault, Plumas County; and Clint Quilter, Inyo County. ▲

On the Horizon in 2022



The California Legislature and Congress will return next year for the final half of their 2021-22 sessions.

Redistricting for federal and state legislative offices is already underway following the decennial Census, promising significant changes both at the federal level, where California is losing a Congressional seat, and in California, where Senators and Assemblymembers must reside in the districts they represent. Several members have already announced their retirements, which could have significant impacts on the composition and leadership within these legislative bodies. The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to affect both legislative and congressional priorities, and the practical business of legislating in DC and Sacramento.

Despite the difficulties of the pandemic and continued challenges from the drought, California continues to experience nearly unprecedented multibillion dollar budget surpluses, both in the current fiscal year and projected into the coming 2022-23 fiscal year. Given the favorable fiscal environment, CSAC will continue to work with CEAC to advance county public works budget priorities, including funding for local transportation infrastructure, increased local support for the Sustainable Groundwater Management Program, and potential bond funding for organics waste diversion infrastructure, just to name a few.

Following the passage of the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, CSAC will work with CEAC, the League of California Cities and regional partners and use the 2021 Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment to advocate for a fair share of federal funds for local transportation priorities. For the first time since MAP 21 was implemented, the federal bill includes dedicated funding for bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects. Local bridge needs were a key element of the 2021 Needs Assessment, and counties will lead the charge in advocating for funding for these vital community connections.

In Flood Control and Water Resources, CSAC and CEAC have built a strong connection with state and federal agencies as counties continue to grapple with a multi-year drought. In 2022 CSAC will continue to advocate for water storage infrastructure, health

and safety disaster funding, and streamlined processes for state and federal aid. CSAC has been building a strong and sustained advocacy program for flood infrastructure from stream gage inventories to post-wildfire debris flow management. Core statewide flood programs including subventions, regulatory streamlining, and ensuring funding is available for all types of flood development will be key to our advocacy strategy. Revisiting state and federal cost-sharing programs and matches are all on the table.

Counties are moving into the implementation phase of SB 1383's organic waste regulations, which will require ongoing advocacy for regulatory streamlining, common-sense approaches to waste reduction, and additional support as counties comply with state regulations. CSAC will advocate to make implementation of this mandate manageable, while reducing the impacts to customers. Finally, CSAC and CEAC will continue to advocate in support of measures that help reduce plastic waste and increase domestic markets for recyclable materials.

2022 will present both unprecedented challenges for county public works programs, but it also promises to provide significant opportunities to secure funding and advance policy changes in support of these vital local programs. The uncertainties of the drought and ongoing natural disasters will make the "ground truth" and practical perspective that county public works officials provide even more important to state and federal policymaking. CSAC looks forward to the ongoing and vital partnership with CEAC as we continue to ensure that counties are positioned to advance their interests and secure necessary funding to serve our communities statewide. ▲





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