



APA CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE JANUARY 2021

By Eric Phillips, Vice President Policy and Legislation
Lauren De Valencia y Sanchez, APA California Lobbyist

2021-2022 Legislative Session Starts in the Midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Legislature returned to work in Sacramento on January 11, a week later than planned, to officially begin the 2021-2022 Two-Year Legislative Session. Session was delayed by one week to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, while the state was under a full Stay-At-Home order. Like most of last year, members are again accompanied by limited staff and will likely only allow limited public participation for hearings in the Capitol, with remote call-in options available. Housing, homelessness and wildfire mitigation will again remain a priority this year, as well other bills that deal directly with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Housing Bills Return from 2020

A number of housing bills from the 2020 Legislative Session failed to pass on the final night of session last year and have now been reintroduced. APA California worked on many of these bills, either supporting or offering support with suggested amendments to make the bills more workable and look forward to doing so again. The Chapter's Legislative Review Team (information below) will be reviewing these bills and all other planning-related bills after the introduction deadline, on February 19.

2021-2022 Budget Proposal Released

The Governor released his 2021-2022 Budget on January 8. Housing and homelessness remain two of the Governor's priorities again this year, along with a broad focus on COVID 19 recovery. Of interest related to housing, the budget proposes:

- Resources to create a new *Housing Accountability Unit* within HCD to monitor and enforce existing housing production laws and additional funding for local technical assistance to meet planning and zoning requirements.
- An extension of COVID-19 tenant protections set to expire at the end of this January.
- Additional funding for the Infill Infrastructure Grant Program and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

The 2021-2022 also provides new funding to support wildfire mitigation, support for transportation infrastructure and zero emission vehicle infrastructure. To read the detailed Budget Summary, please use the following link: <http://ebudget.ca.gov/FullBudgetSummry.pdf>.

Over the next few months, draft budget trailer bill language to implement specifics in the proposed budget will be published online. Budget subcommittees have also begun hearings on these proposals. The Governor will offer a revision to the proposed budget in mid-May and then the final budget must be passed by June 15. Budget trailer bills must be passed by the end of session on September 10. Note that some of the proposed items, such as the extension of COVID-19 tenant protections and affordable housing funds, are designated for early action and may be voted on in the next few weeks.

Plan California – The Chapter’s Legislative Platform

The Chapter’s official legislative platform, “Plan California” will be updated and posted online in early February. The Chapter adopts a new Platform prior to the start of each two-year Legislative Session, which outlines the professional views of the Chapter on priority issues. The Platform also informs the positions the Chapter takes with respect to specific legislative proposals and for advocacy positions. To read more, please visit the *Legislation* page [APA California website](#).

Join the APA California Legislative Review Team

The APA California Legislative Review Team will be meeting on March 4 to review all planning-related bills introduced by the bill introduction deadline. If you would like to join the Legislative Review Team, please fill out the following form: <https://forms.gle/r5ENWgjUETqq4Gvz9>. The APA California Legislative Review Team is open to all current APA California members. The Legislative Review Team helps to provide expertise and professional opinions to the APA California Vice President for Policy & Legislation and Chapter lobbyist to help shape APA California positions on planning topics and specific proposals in the California State Legislature and state agency regulations. In addition to solicitations for feedback and information, Review Team members will receive periodic emails with updates and information about legislative development.

Stay Connected on APA California Legislative Activities

The Chapter has recently updated the *Legislation* page of the APA California [website](#). Members are encouraged to visit this page for up-to-date information related to Chapter legislative activities, which include:

- APA California position letters submitted to the Legislature
- APA California’s “hot bill” list with up-to-date information on all legislation APA California is tracking
- Tools and resources to get involved and support the Chapter’s advocacy efforts as well as at the Section level
- APA National’s legislative program tools and information
- Amicus Curiae Committee briefs