



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

APA CALIFORNIA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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By Erik de Kok, AICP, Vice President for Policy and Legislation

Lauren De Valencia, APA California Lobbyist

Introductory message from the VP

Greetings APA California members! This month marks the start of my two-year term on the Chapter Board of Directors as Vice President for Policy and Legislation. I'm honored and excited to serve the Chapter in this role and will be working with a stellar team in carrying out the Chapter's Policy and Legislative program. **Lauren De Valencia y Sanchez** continues to serve as our Chapter Lobbyist, and we now have two appointed Board members to round out the Policy & Leg team: **Alicia Suarez-Falken**, who was reappointed as the Chapter's National Policy and Legislation Representative; and **Tom Pace**, who has been appointed to a new role on the Board as Technical Advisor for Policy and Legislation. We look forward to serving you all by advocating for the Chapter's interests and pursuing planning excellence in the Chapter's Policy and Legislative program. We also invite and encourage Chapter members from diverse backgrounds and experience levels to engage and participate in the Policy and Legislative program by joining the Chapter's Legislative Review Team (see more details below) and/or engaging with your Section Leg & Policy representatives. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at policy@apacalifornia.org.

Plan California Update

To help shape our state advocacy efforts, APA California has a Board approved Legislative Platform, titled "[Plan California](#)", which is updated at the start of every two-year legislative session. The Platform outlines positions on priority issues and serves as the guiding document for the Chapter's lobbying efforts in the Legislature. The Platform can also be used as the framework for local advocacy efforts by APA California Sections as well. While the Chapter does not take positions or advocate for or against local planning issues, this does not preclude individual Sections from getting involved in such issues consistent with the Platform. A draft update to Plan California for the 2023-2024 legislative session will be shared with the Legislative Review Team for review and feedback. If Chapter members wish to review or comment on the draft, we encourage you to join and submit comments via the Legislative Review Team (see details in the next item). A proposed final draft will go to the Board for approval in mid-February.

Join the APA California Legislative Review Team

APA California's Legislative Review Team provides expert and professional opinions to the APA California Vice President for Policy & Legislation and Chapter lobbyist. The Team is composed of volunteer APA California members and is open to public and private sector planners and students with a wide range of experience. Section legislation/policy representatives are also encouraged to join and participate. This year, the Team will have the opportunity to weigh in on the Chapter's update to the Plan California legislative platform in early February. The Team also typically meets every March to review legislation introduced for the year. In that meeting, positions on pending legislation are considered. Subsequent meetings are held as needed throughout the year and the Legislative Review Team will receive information and requests via email from the VP for Policy and Legislation and Chapter lobbyist. If you are interested in joining, please visit the [APA California website](#) for more information on requirements and how to sign up. The deadline to sign up will be February 1.

California's New Two-Year Legislative Session Begins

The California State Legislature kicked off their 2023 legislative session on January 4, which includes several newly elected legislators who were recently sworn in. With so many new members in the Legislature, we are interested to see what their priorities might be and how they will shape the 2023 legislative session. The deadline to introduce bills is February 17 and it's expected that we will again see several proposals to address the housing and homelessness crisis, in addition to addressing the climate crisis. As always, there will likely be hundreds of bills of interest to planners. APA California will be reviewing these bills and creating a tracking list that will be posted on the [Legislation](#) page of the APA California website. Stay tuned for more updates on specific bills as the session moves forward.

2023-2024 Proposed Budget Released

Governor Newsom released his proposed 2023-2024 California State Budget on January 10, and after two years of historic budget surpluses, this budget anticipates a \$22.5 billion deficit. To balance the Budget, the Governor proposes delaying or shifting some spending commitments in addition to "trigger" cuts that would be reversed in the future if revenue projections change. These trigger cuts are largely focused on climate and transportation. Regardless of these changes, the Governor said the shortfall will not prevent the state from fulfilling past budget promises in areas such as climate change and housing/homelessness, among other priorities.



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The proposed Budget does include some new funding of interest to planners. This includes support for a comprehensive update of OPR's General Plan Guidelines as a result of several newly enacted laws and to align with California's housing, equity and climate priorities. Additionally, new funding for flood protection has been included, which is timely given the severe weather and flooding the state faced over the past few weeks. Finally, funding for a fifth round of \$1 billion in Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) grants has been included, but not without strings attached. The Administration plans to work with the Legislature to condition eligibility of future funding on compliance with state housing laws. Addressing the housing and homelessness crisis remains a top priority for the Governor as does accountability.

Over the next few months, draft budget trailer bill language to implement specifics in the proposed budget will be published online and budget subcommittees will hold hearings on these proposals. The Governor will offer a revision to the proposed budget in mid-May and the final budget must be passed by June 15. Budget trailer bills to implement the budget must be passed by the end of session on September 14. For more information, please review the Governor's [press release](#).