

FOCUS

Analysis, Commentary and Updates on Legislative and Policy Issues that Affect California Cities

November 10, 2005
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The Legislature is
in recess until
January 4.

POST-ELECTION OPPORTUNITY: LET'S SOLVE THE STATE'S INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEM

With a contentious election behind them, state legislative leaders and Gov. Schwarzenegger are reportedly scheduled sit down on November 10 to explore post-election opportunities to work together more cooperatively. That's good news for Californians everywhere, including California cities. Elected city officials – who serve their constituents in a non-partisan capacity – understand as well as anyone that voters want and expect their elected officials to work together to solve problems. *For more, see Page 3.*

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SENATE SHIFTS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Senate President pro Tem Don Perata has announced the following changes among caucus leaders and committee chairs: *For more, see Page 2.*

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CHANNEL COUNTY CITIES MAKE ETHICS A PRIORITY

Rudy Natoli, council member of Pismo Beach and a member of the League of California Cities board of directors, is spearheading an effort in the Channel Counties Division to collect the ethics policies of cities and encourage cities without such policies to adopt them. *For more, see Page 2.*

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California Cities
website at
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billsearch](http://www.cacities.org/billsearch).

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SLATED FOR CHANGE**

BRAC UPDATE: CONGRESS VOTES TO MAINTAIN LIST OF FACILITIES SLATED FOR CHANGE

On October 27, the U.S. Congress took action to complete the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process by voting not to reject the list of military facilities slated for change.

The U.S. Department of Defense prepared the list of military facilities in order to transform our military to meet our nation's future security needs. It was reviewed and modified by a commission of retired military leaders and other experts and then forwarded to the president and ultimately Congress.

The October 27 vote was likely the final step in that process and virtually ensures that the existing BRAC list will be enacted without change.

"This is very good news for California," said Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. "In its preparations and review, the Pentagon and the BRAC Commission recognized what we here in California have long known - California is critical to our nation's ability to meet the threats of the 21st century and our military bases have unique advantages because of their location in California in meeting those threats."

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SENATE from page 1

- Sen. **Tom Torlakson** replaces Sen. **Kevin Murray** as caucus chair.
- Sen. **Kevin Murray** replaces Sen. **Carole Migden** as Appropriations chair.
- Sen. **Carole Migden** replaces Sen. **Richard Alarcon** as caucus whip and Sen. **Elaine Alquist** as Public Safety chair.
- Sen. **Elaine Alquist** replaces Sen. **Joe Simitian** as Human Services chair.
- Sen. **Joe Simitian** replaces Sen. **Alan Lowenthal** as Environmental Quality chair.
- Sen. **Alan Lowenthal** replaces Sen. **Tom Torlakson** as Transportation and Housing chair.

The new assignments present a good opportunity for city officials represented by these senators to reach out to them, and to congratulate them on their new assignments. You can find their addresses and phone numbers on the Legislative Resources page of the League's website.

ETHICS from page 1

The collected policies of the Channel County cities are posted on the Institute for Local Government (ILG) website (www.ca-ilg.org/ethicscodes), and include:

- Goleta
- Simi Valley
- San Luis Obispo
- Port Hueneme
- Fillmore
- Morro Bay
- Thousand Oaks
- Pismo Beach
- Paso Robles (Council Policies and Procedures, Chapter 2)
- Oxnard (Administrative Manual, Standards of Ethics)

In 2004, the League encouraged cities to adopt positive, values-based ethics codes as part of its focus on ethics and public confidence as a strategic priority. Research conducted by ILG (the League's non-profit research arm) indicated that when it comes to the effectiveness of ethics codes, process is almost more important than product.

For those whose conduct is to be guided by such a code, having a significant role in developing it ensures greater adherence to it. Regular review and updating of the code is also important. As Council Member Natoli observed, "The goal is to foster a culture of ethics and ethical decision-making at city hall."

For more information about public sector ethics and ethics laws, please visit ILG's Ethics Resource Center at www.ca-ilg.org/trust.

Our Mission

Restore and protect local control for cities
through education and advocacy to
enhance the quality of life for all Californians.

POST-ELECTION from page 1

While there are many statewide issues that urgently require attention, one that both the administration and the Legislature are likely to identify as ripe for action is the need for increased investment in infrastructure.

This need was identified last year by the League board of directors as one of three strategic goals for the organization. The League worked hard last year to ensure that, with the state's improving revenue situation, Proposition 42 transportation funding would – for the first time since it was authorized by the voters in 2002 – be appropriated to transportation projects, rather than shifted into the state general fund to offset the state deficit.

The governor and legislators agreed – resulting in \$1.3 billion in funds flowing to transportation projects throughout the state, including \$254 million to cities and counties to help pay for local street and road maintenance projects. Under Prop. 42 funding formulas, that local share is scheduled to increase to \$560 million in FY 2008-09.

It is clear to most observers that the state's growing infrastructure needs can only be adequately addressed with a permanent, dedicated source of revenue. Toward that end, the League has been working recently with an alliance of transportation stakeholders to explore the potential for a ballot measure or initiative that would permanently dedicate Prop. 42 funds – the sales tax on gasoline – to transportation. Such a constitutional amendment would put an end to the annual fight to make sure these transportation-derived revenues always go to transportation investments.

Moreover, the League will be working with other partners through the California Infrastructure Coalition (CIC), a coalition of business groups, local and regional government association and non profit organizations. The League and CIC will assist both the governor and the Legislature in the months ahead to assess the extent of statewide infrastructure needs and voters' willingness to support measures that provide ongoing infrastructure funding. (League Executive Director Chris McKenzie currently serves as Chair of the CIC.)

The League will have a special interest in proposals that help construct infrastructure needed to serve the increasing number of residents of California's cities, home of approximately 80 percent of all Californians. Neither the League nor the CIC have taken formal positions on any bond measure at this time, but it is expected to be at the top of the list of options to be considered during the next legislative session.

As these discussions continue, we believe that the experience of local officials in working to gain voter support for local transportation funding measures can be useful and important for state officials who are trying to craft workable, winnable statewide solutions. For example, local officials have learned that they must do a good job of documenting the need for additional funding, and present to voters a specific program for how new funds will be spent. The local experience with these measures is just one of many reasons that consultation with, and participation by local officials is an integral part of statewide infrastructure strategies.

For more information on CIC, please visit its website at www.calinfrastructure.org.

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