

# PRIORITY FOCUS



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*Special Note: Priority Focus will not publish on Friday, Nov. 28 due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The newsletter will resume publishing in Friday, Dec. 5.*

## **CURRENT SPECIAL BUDGET SESSION MAKES LITTLE PROGRESS** **Governor May Call New Legislature into Special Session**

As the economic news worsened, the Legislature made little progress this week to resolve the shortfall in the less than two-month old FY 2008-09 state budget. There has been some activity on the budget recently but no major agreement with time running out on the special session which ends on Nov. 30. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger released a memo on Nov. 19 stating that he will immediately call a special session of the new Legislature when it convenes on Dec. 1 if the current Legislature does not take action. He has the power to do this under the provisions of Proposition 58, which would require legislators to address the current budget year's deficit within 45 days. *For more, see Page 2.*



## **NATIONAL LEAGUE OF CITIES ELECTS RIVERSIDE MAYOR RON LOVERIDGE FIRST VICE PRESIDENT**

Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge was elected National League of Cities (NLC) first vice president during its Congress of Cities convention in Orlando, Fla., last week. Elected to a one year term, Loveridge will assist the NLC president in leading the board of directors to shape priorities, direct advocacy, research and organizational membership activities. The Riverside mayor is in line to become NLC president in 2010. *For more, see Page 2.*



## **L.A. CITY COUNCIL MEMBER ED REYES ELECTED TO NLC BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

During the National League of Cities (NLC) Congress of Cities in Orlando, Fla., last week, Los Angeles City Council Member Ed Reyes was elected to the 2009 NLC board of directors. Reyes is one of 18 new board members elected at the meeting. NLC's board of directors is comprised of the president, first vice president, second vice president, past presidents in government service, and approximately 40 other members. *For more, see Page 2.*

**'Budget' Continued from Page 1...**

When the Governor called a special session on the budget earlier this month, he announced that California already has a revenue shortfall of \$11.2 billion for the current fiscal year. Shortly after, the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) reported that this shortfall is projected to grow to \$28 billion when combined with the FY 2009-10 deficit.

In the past week, several budget activities have occurred in the State Capitol. The Assembly Budget Committee met on Friday, Nov. 14 to discuss the Governor's budget proposal and LAO's analysis. The Governor has been meeting with legislative leaders as well as the "Big Five" plus incoming Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento). The Senate and Assembly were scheduled to meet this weekend but postponed until Tuesday, Nov. 25.

The League will continue to provide regular updates on state budget developments as they occur through Listservs, *Priority Focus* and [www.cacities.org](http://www.cacities.org).

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**'Loveridge' Continued from Page 1...**

First elected to the Riverside City Council in 1979, Loveridge was elected mayor in 1994. A professor of political science at the University of California, Riverside, the mayor holds a PhD from Stanford University. Loveridge is also a member of the California Air Resources Board, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the Southern California Association of Governments.

Loveridge has a long history of service with the League of California Cities and NLC. He served as League president from 2003-2004, leading the organization during the successful passage of Proposition 1A, which protects local revenues from being used by the state. For NLC, Loveridge's service includes his tenure on the board of directors, his position as vice chair of the City Futures Panel on Equity and Opportunity, chairmanship of the American-Canadian Cities in 2004-2005 and participation on NLC's International Council.

When Loveridge becomes NLC president next November, he will be the first Californian to serve in the position since former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley held the post in 1974.

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**'Reyes' Continued from Page 1...**

Elected to the Los Angeles City Council in 2001, Reyes represents some of the nation's most densely populated areas. He has a background in urban planning and as a council member, he has worked to create almost 70 acres of new park space in the city by transforming rail yards into green space.

Reyes serves as chair of the Los Angeles City Council's Planning and Land Use Management and Ad Hoc Los Angeles River committees and is vice chair of the Housing, Community and Economic Development Committee. In these positions he's worked to expand the city's housing stock, spearheaded the city-wide passage of zoning policies to encourage mixed-use developments around underused commercial and transportation corridors and more.

Reyes' NLC board of directors term is two years. He joins other California city officials on the NLC board including Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge who was elected NLC first vice president at the Orlando meeting. Also serving on the NLC board in 2009 are Robin Lowe, council member, Hemet and Tzeitel Paras-Caracci, council member Duarte. Both board members terms expire in November 2009.

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**PPIC Reports: 75 Percent of Cities and Counties Addressing Climate Change**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released a study earlier this week examining local responses to climate change. The study is titled *Climate Policy at the Local Level*, and among the report's highlights is the finding that 75 percent of California's cities and counties are actively engaged in climate change issues. The study found that cities and counties in the San Francisco

Bay Area and the Sacramento Metro Area have the highest rate of activities related to addressing climate change.

Citing a lack of concrete information on what local governments are doing to address climate change, PPIC instigated the study in collaboration with the League, the California State Association of Counties and the Institute for Local Government (ILG). The survey was conducted over a seven month period beginning in May 2008 with 280 cities and 30 counties responding. This represents 73 percent of California's population.

### **Key Findings**

- Approximately 75 percent of cities and counties are working on climate change issues;
- Approximately 33 percent of cities and counties are participating in one or more efforts that encourage local climate policy action;
- More than half of all cities and counties have completed (or are planning to conduct) emissions inventories of municipal facilities and operations;
- 42 percent are also doing this process for their larger communities;
- More than half of the cities and counties surveyed have completed (or are planning to complete) climate action plans; and
- Cities and counties, similar to the state, are more focused on mitigation efforts (such as investments in energy efficiency technologies) than adaptation efforts (such as strategies to prepare communities for natural disasters resulting from climate change).

The complete study can be found on PPIC's Web site at [www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org) (<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=849>)

PPIC also released a study titled *Preparing for the Inevitable: State Global Warming Strategy Needs to Plan for Climate Change* on Nov. 17. This study examines how California institutions are preparing for climate change challenges. The study can also be found on PPIC's Web site at [www.ppic.org](http://www.ppic.org). <http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=755>

ILG's California Climate Action Network offers resources for city and county officials interested in strategies to address climate change locally. Information can be found on ILG's Web site at [www.ca-ilg.org/climatechange](http://www.ca-ilg.org/climatechange).

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### **Register Now for Dec. 2 Conference on AB 32 and Local Government**

The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) is offering a conference on Dec. 2 in Sacramento on its research into how local governments in California address and adapt to climate change. Titled "Emerging Issues in Climate Policy: Promoting Local Initiative, Addressing Impacts", the half day event will focus on the role local governments will play in helping the state reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 to meet AB 32's goals. The California Research Bureau is co-sponsoring the event.

#### **Speakers include:**

- Louise Bedsworth, PPIC researcher
- Ellen Hanak, PPIC researcher
- Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi
- Ron Loveridge, mayor, Riverside
- Julia Burrows, deputy city manager, Roseville

#### **Event details:**

Registration opens at 9 a.m. and the conference runs from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. conference with lunch provided.

California State Association of Counties Conference Center  
1020 11th Street, 2nd Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Registration:**

The event is free but space is limited so city officials are encouraged to register immediately by contacting PPIC via e-mail at [events@ppic.org](mailto:events@ppic.org) to reserve a spot.

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**State Agency Addressing Rapid Decline in Commodity Prices for Recycled Materials**

The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) announced its intention last week to work with cities and counties coping with the impact of rapidly declining prices for recycled goods. The state agency is planning to hold a meeting in Sacramento early December to discuss short and long term solutions to ease the situation. The League will update members with information on the meeting when details are released.

Recycling paper, cardboard and plastics helps California combat climate change and generates vital revenues. Scientists report that the methane gas produced by decomposing paper products and other organic materials is 23 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

The state leads the nation in waste diversion: California converts approximately 52 million tons of solid waste annually into newer higher value products. Recently prices for these recycled commodities rapidly declined and local governments are under pressure to secure additional storage space for goods ready for recycling.

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**Sustainability Feature Request: On the Green Front**

*Priority Focus* regularly runs a feature highlighting the sustainability efforts/programs many cities are implementing. We are constantly on the look out for creative ways that cities are becoming green or finding a way to involve their community and reduce their carbon footprint.

The stories are typically 300-600 words and although the focus is generally on one aspect of what an individual city is doing on this front, on occasion, a multi-city effort is profiled.

We are interested in reviewing your city's Sustainability Plan or Green Plan to learn about your city's programs.

Please e-mail a copy of your Sustainability Plan to Adrienne Sprenger, League communications specialist at [asprenger@cacities.org](mailto:asprenger@cacities.org). For file sizes larger than 4 MB, please e-mail us a link to your plan on your Web site or burn a copy to CD and mail to:

Adrienne Sprenger  
League of California Cities  
1400 K Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

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**Find a Bill, Legislators, Leg Committee, or Ask League Leg Staff**

Visit (and bookmark!) the League's [Legislative Resources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources) Web page ([www.cacities.org/legresources](http://www.cacities.org/legresources)). You'll find a roster and contact information for the League's legislative staff; the online Bill Search program, background materials on lobbying your legislators, and more.

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