



HOUSING, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY COMMITTEE

Highlights

June 5, 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Leslie Castelano (Chair); Jorgel Chavez (Vice Chair); Tricia Almiron; Murray Anderson; Rob Baquera; Kim Barber; Scott Behrendt; Evan Branning; Lee Butler; Larissa De La Cruz; Tanya Doby; Darin DuPont; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Rebecca Flynn; Claudia Frometa; Terry Hines; Cecilia Hupp; Andrew Jared; Lisa Kaplan; Tamala Kelly; Belle La; Mark Lazzaretto; Kari Leon; Julie Lucido; Yvonne Martinez Beltran; Patricia Matthews; Stacey Mattina; Ed Miranda; Alice Patino; Debra Porada; Kelly Purvis; Kelly Ramirez; Rocky Rhodes; Tim Saiki; Wes Speake; Niroop Srivatsa; Julie Testa; Maureen Toms; Stephanie Vargas; Brad Waller; Mark Waronek; Scott Webb

Cal Cities Partners: Clayton Miller

Staff: Brady Guertin, Legislative Advocate
Waleed Hojeij, Policy & Legislative Affairs Analyst

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Castelano welcomed everyone to the meeting.

II. Public Comment

Chair Castellano opened the meeting for public comment. No public comments were received.

III. CEQA Ballot Initiative

The committee received a comprehensive presentation on the Building an Affordable California Act (BACA), a proposed statewide ballot initiative that would establish an optional alternative review process for qualifying "essential projects" under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Permit Streamlining Act. Staff reviewed the major components of the initiative, including new tribal consultation requirements, streamlined alternatives analysis during environmental review, mandatory timelines for CEQA processing, prevailing wage and labor standards, revised standards of judicial review, and limitations on CEQA litigation.

Committee members engaged in a thoughtful discussion about the initiative's potential impact on local governments. Members considered the benefits of creating greater certainty and predictability in project approvals while also discussing implementation challenges, administrative responsibilities, environmental review requirements, and the potential effects on local decision-making authority. Following discussion, the committee voted 23 to 8 to recommend an Oppose position on the BACA ballot measure for consideration by the Cal Cities Board of Directors.

IV. Recent Housing Research and Implications for Local Governments

Unfortunately, due to time constraints and a longer discussion on the BACA initiative, David Garcia from the Turner Center for Housing Innovation at UC Berkeley was unable to join us to present to the committee on recent housing research.

V. City Legislative Engagement

Staff provided an overview of Cal Cities' city legislative engagement initiative and highlighted the important role city position letters play in strengthening local government advocacy. Members received guidance on submitting letters through the California Legislature's Position Letter Portal, forwarding copies of letters to Cal Cities for tracking and city engagement data collection, and using the sample letters available on the Cal Cities Bill Search webpage.

The presentation also included updated data on city participation during the current legislative session. The data included a summary of city letter submissions by division, policy committee, and bills of interest, as well as recognition of the cities with the highest levels of legislative engagement. Staff emphasized that timely city letters provide legislators with valuable local perspectives, help strengthen Cal Cities' advocacy efforts, and can potentially shape legislative negotiations throughout the legislative session.

VI. Legislative and Regulatory Update

Staff concluded the meeting with an overview of major legislative and budget developments affecting housing, planning, permitting, and economic development. Members reviewed upcoming legislative deadlines and received updates on several priority measures related to housing element implementation, missing-middle housing, the density bonus law, accessory dwelling units, development impact fees, permitting reforms, remote inspections, housing finance, transit-oriented development, and Regional Housing Needs Allocation planning and implementation.

Staff also discussed current budget proposals around funding affordable housing and discussed Cal Cities' advocacy positions on several significant housing bills. Committee members were encouraged to continue monitoring legislation and engaging with Cal Cities staff throughout the remainder of the legislative session.

VII. Adjourn

Next Virtual Meeting: Staff will notify committee members by **August 7** if the policy committee meets in September. If you have any questions, please contact [Meg Desmond](#), Cal Cities Program Manager, Legislative Administration.