



LEAGUE OF
CALIFORNIA
CITIES

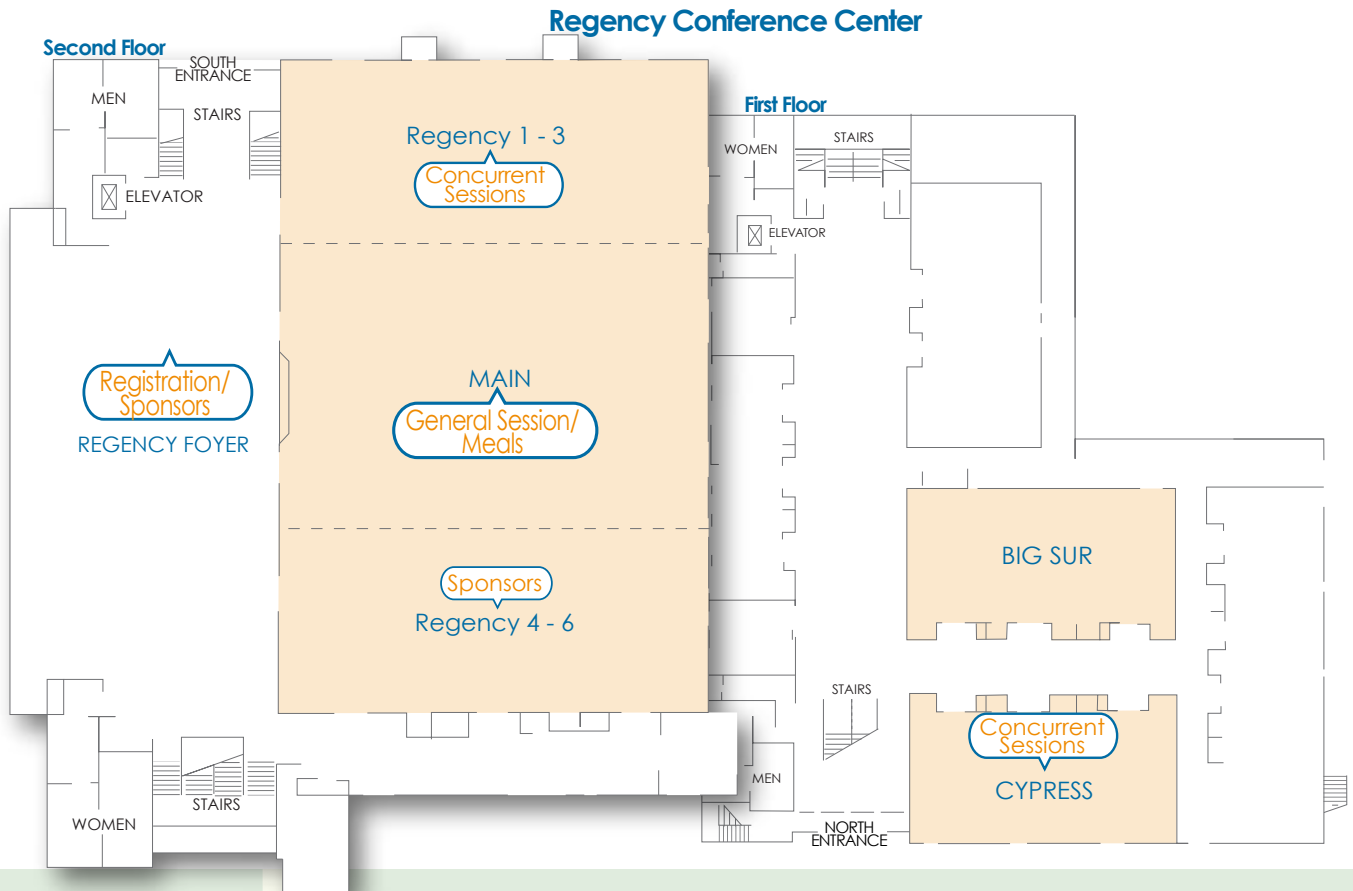


PUBLIC WORKS OFFICERS INSTITUTE

February 25-27, 2026
Hyatt Regency Monterey

Navigating change, powering progress.

FLOOR PLAN



CONFERENCE INFORMATION

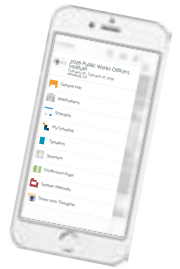


NETWORK
Hyatt_Meeting

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Publicworks

DOWNLOAD THE APP!

The Cal Cities mobile app provides a personalized conference experience with access to the full program, key updates, a customized schedule, and more. Download through your device's app store by searching "League of California Cities" or "Cal Cities." Once downloaded, select "Find Guides" and search for 2026 Public Works Officers Institute. Don't forget to allow push notifications to receive up-to-date conference information and opt in for additional networking opportunities.



PRESENTATIONS AND MATERIALS

Looking for presentation slides and session materials? All materials submitted are posted as they are received and can be found online at www.calcities.org/PWOMaterials or within the app.

WEAR YOUR BADGE!

Please remember to wear your attendee badge at all times as only registered attendees are allowed admissions to all sessions, meals, and receptions. If you lose or damage yours, please visit the registration desk for a new one.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

Scan the QR code to send us your feedback on the institute by March 13.



SAVE THE DATES:

2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPO
SEPTEMBER 23-25 | ANAHEIM CONVENTION CENTER

2027 PUBLIC WORKS OFFICERS INSTITUTE
MARCH 17-19 | HYATT REGENCY ORANGE COUNTY,
GARDEN GROVE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. **Registration Open**
Regency Foyer

10:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. **Visit with Elite Sponsors**
Regency 4-6 and Foyer

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. **Opening General Session**
Regency Main

Opening Remarks: *Rebecca Neves, President, Public Works Department and Public Works Director/City Engineer, Folsom and Johannes Hoevertsz, Director of Public Infrastructure, Sonoma County*

Cal Cities and CEAC President's Welcome

Local Streets and Roads Awards

Keynote: Leading with Authenticity

Norma Hollis, the Godmother of Authenticity, brings over 30 years of research on human nature, self awareness, and authentic leadership. As the author of programs for human development, she offers frameworks for navigating change, life management, and making aligned decisions. With a pioneering career spanning early childhood development and industry shifting leadership in the speaking world, Norma shares practical tools that help leaders strengthen clarity, confidence, and authentic impact.

Kenote Speaker: *Dr. Norma Hollis, Leading Authenticity Expert*



2:45 - 4:00 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Upping Your Communications Game
Cypress

How many times have you heard: "I never got the notification," "Who decided to remove parking for a bike lane?" or "Who do I talk to about the sprinklers that run nonstop?" As demand for instant information rises, local agencies are under pressure to deliver timely, clear, and accessible messaging. In this session, public works directors and a communications team member will share effective engagement strategies. Learn what works — from quick posts to high-impact videos — and leave with actionable ideas and adaptable communication plan templates for your agency's size and resources. Even if you "are" the communications team, this session will help you take your outreach to the next level.

Speakers: *Sanjay Mishra, Director of Public Works, Fairfield*
Erica Ahmann Smithies, Public Works Director, American Canyon
Bill Way, Communications Manager, Fairfield

2:45 - 4:00 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Using the Data in Your Pavement Management Systems to Improve Cost-Effectiveness
Regency 1-3

Learn how agencies can unlock greater value from data already collected through Pavement Management Systems (PMS) by looking beyond basic Pavement Condition Index (PCI) scores and focusing on additional indicators. By cracking the data that has already been collected and paid for, agencies can improve the selection and timing of maintenance and rehabilitation work. This talk will show what to focus on and how to improve decision making regarding treatment selection and timing.

Moderator and Speaker: *Matt Randall, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works, Placer County*
Speaker: *John Harvey, Director, University of California Pavement Research Center, Davis*

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

4:15 - 5:30 p.m.
Concurrent Session

A New Hope for Deferred Maintenance: Tackling an 18-year Backlog Cypress

In a galaxy not so far away, the City of Rosemead faced an epic challenge: nearly two decades of deferred maintenance threatening civic well-being. Enter a new Public Works Director launching a bold mission to restore balance to the city's facilities within the first six months on the job! Along with Schneider Electric, Rosemead used California's Government Code 4217 energy performance contracting statute to bundle critical citywide improvements into one self-funded project. This initiative is modernizing outdated mechanical systems, replacing unsafe electrical infrastructure, upgrades lighting at City Hall, community centers, and advances a citywide street-lighting plan. This panel shows how collaboration, smart funding strategies, and technology can help cities overcome the dark side of deferred maintenance.

Moderator and Speaker: Sam Hall, Public Partnership Leader, Schneider Electric

Speakers: Sulma Hernandez, Program Manager, SoCalREN, County of Los Angeles

Arlene Tieu, Public Works Administrative Analyst, Rosemead

4:15 - 5:30 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Fiber Frenzy: Navigating Fiber Deployments and Local ROW Management Regency 1-3

As fiber deployments accelerate across California, local governments face increasingly complex questions about franchise rights, permitting, and the use of public assets. This session clarifies state and federal regulatory frameworks, including CPUC oversight, recent FCC actions, and new California laws on microtrenching and batch permitting, while outlining practical strategies for managing rights-of-way and negotiating access to government-owned fiber and conduit. Presenters will highlight best practices to avoid common permitting pitfalls, strengthen pavement and ROW management, and evaluate partnership opportunities with private providers. Attendees will leave with a clear understanding of the legal landscape and greater confidence in overseeing fiber projects.

Moderator: Tillman "Tim" Lay, Partner, Best Best & Krieger LLP

Speakers: Helen Collins, Director of Public Works West Hollywood

Brittany Weidner, Associate Attorney, Best Best & Krieger LLP

5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Networking Reception Regency Foyer

Catch up with colleagues while enjoying appetizers and no-host beverages during the evening networking reception.

2025 – 2026 Department Officers

President, Rebecca Neves, Director of Public Works/City Engineer, Folsom

First Vice President, Brendan Ottoboni, Director of Public Works, Engineering, Chico

Department Director, Scott Smith, Director of Public Works, Fountain Valley

Immediate Past President, Scott Smith, Director of Public Works, Fountain Valley

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Registration Open Regency Foyer
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Visit with Elite Sponsors Regency 4-6 and Foyer
8:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Networking Breakfast Regency Main
9:00 - 10:15 a.m. <i>Concurrent Session</i>	Planning for Emergencies - Disaster Planning and Coordination Across Agencies Regency 1-3 Join California Water Service for a panel discussion on how local governments, public safety agencies, and utilities prepare for a variety of natural disasters including wildfires, earthquakes, and floods to ensure that they stay coordinated as they work to keep the public safe. Learn more about what goes on behind the scenes in disaster response preparation discussions, and how to quickly start the recovery process. Moderator: Shannon McGovern, Public Policy Program Director, California Water Service Speakers: Brendan Ottoboni, First Vice President, Public Works Department and Director of Public Works, Engineering, Chico Shane Vander Veen, Deputy Fire Chief, Salinas Fire Department Henry Wind, Operations Director, California Water Service Co
9:00 - 10:15 a.m. <i>Concurrent Session</i>	Women in Public Works Roundtable Cypress Join our dynamic discussion highlighting the experiences, challenges, and successes of women in public works. This conversation will center around real-world insights, leadership strategies, and lessons learned on navigating career growth in a traditionally male-dominated industry. This roundtable is open to everyone who wants to build more diverse, successful teams within their communities. Moderator and Speaker: Rebecca Neves, President, Public Works Department and Public Works Director/ City Engineer, Folsom Speakers: Joan Araujo, Director Central Services, County of Ventura Julie Lucido, Director of Public Works, Napa
10:30 - 11:45 a.m. <i>Concurrent Session</i>	Public Works Visibility: How to be Recognized as First Responders Cypress Public works professionals have been referred to as the silent first responders. Typically, they are the first to arrive after natural or manmade disasters, clearing the way for other first responders, and last to leave, long after the emergency is over. Despite the Presidential Policy Directive 8, which officially recognizes public works as first responders, issued in response to 9/11, many do not regard public works as first responders. This presentation will share how to increase the visibility of your public works department with the public, elected officials and other departments within your agency. Moderator and Speaker: Joubin Pakpour, Region 8 Director, American Public Works Association Speakers: Warren Lai, Public Works Director, Contra Costa County Adam Nelkie, Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer, Pleasanton Rich Payne, Director of Public Works, Walnut Creek

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

10:30 - 11:45 a.m.
Concurrent Session

Charging Ahead of ACF: Strategies to Accelerate the Shift to Zero-Emission Government Fleets Regency 1-3

In 2025, the California Air and Resources Board (CARB) withdrew its waiver request to allow stricter enforcement of vehicle emission standards. But, the Advanced Clean Fleets (ACF) rule doesn't require a waiver, leaving it up to state and local governments to lead the charge in California's EV transition. Is your agency prepared for the 100% ZEV procurement requirement coming in 2026? This panel brings together public works leaders – each representing different scales and stages of EV fleet implementation—to share lessons learned as they navigate the challenges of planning, funding, and deploying electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

Moderator: Sam Zantzing, Head of EV & Fleet Electrification, ForeFront Power

Speakers: Guy Eisenbrey, Director of Municipal Services, Apple Valley

Charley Marchesano, Chief, Capital Construction and Sustainability Program, County of San Diego

11:45 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Lunch with a Lobbyist Big Sur

Grab lunch and join us for an open discussion on how lobbying works, how policy priorities are shaped, and how professionals can engage effectively in the legislative process.

11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Networking Lunch Regency Main

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

General Session Regency Main

Opening Remarks: Scott Smith, Department Director and Immediate Past President, Public Works Department and Public Works Director, Fountain Valley

APWA Remarks: Vic Bienes, President, APWA

From Concept to Impact: AI Strategies for Public Works Leadership

Artificial Intelligence isn't an abstract concept, it's a tool transforming how public works departments operate and engage with their communities. This session moves beyond introductory concepts to showcase real-world applications, lessons learned, and implementation strategies. Explore how AI is being used for predictive maintenance, smart dispatching, asset management, and synthesizing public input. Highlighting tools like Co-Pilot, ChatGPT, Claude, and more, along with California city-specific AI pilot programs and internal usage policies, this session will demonstrate how AI can enhance productivity, improve customer service, automate reporting and support decision-making, while maintaining ethical guardrails and transparency. Participants will leave with actionable insights, sample guidelines for safe experimentation, and a roadmap for integrating AI into everyday workflows. Whether you're looking to streamline processes, elevate community engagement, or just understand what the AI fuss is all about, this session will give you the confidence to take the next step.

Moderator: Carmen Kasner, CA Sector Growth Director, Ardurra Group, Inc.

Speakers: Gabriela Dow, Director, Community Relations & Public Affairs, Ardurra Group, Inc.
Kristina Ray, Director of LEAN Government, San Marcos

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Claiming Compliance Credit for Stormwater Management Strategies Cypress

Stormwater runoff is heavily regulated throughout California, requiring municipalities of all sizes to implement comprehensive programs to control the discharge of pollutants in runoff. This panel presentation will explore an approach to tracking and quantifying benefits from structural stormwater controls, that provides a cost-effective way for municipalities to document regulatory compliance and communicate benefits to the environment and surrounding communities.

Moderator: Grant Sharp, Manager, South OC Watershed Management Area, Public Works, Orange County

Speakers: Kathleen Elmquist, Product Owner, Environmental Science Associates
Aaron Poresky, Senior Principal, Geosyntec Consultants

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

2:15 - 3:30 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Accelerating Sidewalk Repairs with Data and Slicing Regency 1-3

This session highlights how the City of Sunnyvale paired field condition assessment with GIS to track and triage 4,700 sidewalk repair locations across the city. Through customized mobile data collection and asset management integration, Sunnyvale created an interactive platform for budgeting, planning, and progress tracking. The data enabled a hybrid approach, combining low-cost slicing repairs and full replacements, streamlining repairs, and improving public safety. Learn how public agencies can replicate this model to cut costs, prioritize repairs, and justify capital funding. The presentation includes workflow examples, data schemas, and lessons learned from implementation.

Speakers: Joseph Ortega, Vice President, Precision Concrete Cutting
Sean Smith, Deputy Director-Public Works Operations, Sunnyvale

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.
Concurrent Session

Strategic Funding and Grant Writing for Public Works Cypress

Obtaining grant funds should be a core mission of each and every public works department. Grant funds allow your agency to leverage limited local funds to deliver more impactful and high-quality public works projects. Join this session to learn important grant writing tips and tricks from two grant writing professionals who will each present a case study of recent successful grant applications. You will also hear insightful perspectives of a local agency project/grant manager. In addition to practical techniques, this session will emphasize the importance of strategic funding development through the intentional alignment of funding program efforts with community priorities and capital projects. Participants will explore how to develop a proactive funding strategy, identify competitive opportunities, build internal capacity for sustained success, and achieve community goals through successful grant writing and strategic planning.

Moderator: Jennifer Rosales, Project Director, Ardurra Group, Inc.

Speakers: Michael Dour, Senior Transportation Planner, Psomas
Brendan Ottoboni, First Vice President, Public Works Department and Director of Public Works, Engineering, Chico
Alison Winter, Sr. Funding Manager, Ardurra Group, Inc.

3:45 - 5:00 p.m.
Concurrent Session

From Staff to Systems: Retaining Knowledge within your Agency Regency 1-3

This session equips maintenance superintendents with practical insights on how modern asset management can protect their workforce and infrastructure. Explore the challenges posed by an aging workforce, knowledge loss, and outdated legacy systems, while learning how documenting and formalizing maintenance practices can streamline daily operations, preserve institutional expertise, and strengthen capital planning. Through real-world examples and case studies, this session highlights how superintendents can lead change, improve efficiency, and build resilient teams ready for future demands. Additionally, learn how ArcGIS Online can be used to create custom solutions designed to track the repair and replacement of city assets, such as signs, potholes, ADA ramps, and more.

Moderator and Speaker: Jeff Muir, Regional Manager, PSD Citywide

Speakers: Timothy Hunt, Trees and Hardscape Supervisor, Lakewood
Kelli Pickler, Director of Public Works, Lakewood
Aaron Sutton, GIS Manager, Bucknam Infrastructure Group

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

8:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Registration Open
Regency Foyer

8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

Networking Breakfast
Regency Main

9:00 - 10:15 a.m.

Cal Cities Legislative Update
Regency Main

A Cal Cities legislative representative and CSAC legislative advocate, will answer your questions and provide their insights on the latest in public works-related policies being discussed in Sacramento.

Moderator: Rebecca Neves, President, Public Works Department and Public Works Director/City Engineer

Speakers: Damon Conklin, Legislative Advocate, League of California Cities

Mark Neuburger, Legislative Advocate, California State Association of Counties

10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Closing General Session
Regency Main



Keynote: Mastering Your Memory

The human brain possesses an incredible amount of power to store and recall information. Unfortunately, most people are never taught how to fully access this ability. In this fun and highly engaging keynote, attendees will learn unique and exciting methods to increase their memory skills to extraordinary levels. Most importantly, this session will teach you how to use these concepts in daily life. Instantly recalling people's names, giving presentations without notes, increased focus, and improved mental organization are just a few of the practical benefits attendees will take away from this session.

Closing Remarks: Brendan Ottoboni, First Vice President, Public Works Department and Director of Public Works, Engineering, Chico

Keynote Speaker: Tyler Enslin, Professional Speaker, Business Owner, Tyler Enslin International



LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES

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