

## 2012 Legislative Action Days

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**Infll: Vision vs. Reality:** Devising methods to expand infill development has become a growing discussion in the State Capitol. While the vision of infill development is lofty and laudable, the practical challenges in siting and building such projects are considerable. Compounding this is the loss of redevelopment. The League urges legislators to carefully consider the realities of infill development when considering legislation, and focus on solutions and incentives that will assist local governments, not compound the problem with ill-considered mandates.

### Key Messages:

- **Resources are needed.** As the State attempts to promote infill development, it must help develop alternative sources of funding. Infill development is difficult and expensive. Local governments must tackle issues such as aging infrastructure, brownfield mitigation and concerns from the community. These costs often make it difficult to attract investors to infill projects. With the elimination of redevelopment funding, local governments have lost the ability to help make infill projects “pencil out.” State and local budgets are perilously tight and the housing market has slowed. These fiscal realities must be considered before the State takes any action that affects local governments.
- **Flexibility is the key to success.** Just as California's 482 cities' goals and needs are different, so too are their infill challenges. Cities need workable tools to promote and produce infill projects--not more State mandates and restrictions. Flexibility to resolve unique local problems will allow communities to move forward.
- **Local community input is critical.** While it may seem to slow the development process, successful infill development rests on an open and inclusive community dialogue. Taxpayers fund many of the infill projects in their communities. Robust public participation creates the transparency and trust needed to ensure that new development is viewed as a positive change. Project developers ultimately move on, but local elected officials remain accountable for the decisions that affect their communities.
- **Conflicting state barriers must be examined.** Local governments must navigate through barriers which can conflict with policies to promote infill development. An example of this is the existing 200-year flood planning requirements for cities within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley. Starting in 2015, cities and counties within the Valley cannot approve *any* development without making a finding of 200-year flood protection. However, maps showing these areas are not available. These sorts of conflicts need to be reconciled.
- **Stability with SB 375 is required.** The implementation of SB 375 is in its infancy, yet already the San Diego region's plan, which secured the concurrence of the Air Resources Board, has been subject to legal challenges. State agencies are also issuing guidelines on infill issues, and legislation is being proposed to regulate development and impose mandatory parking standards. This rush to heap criteria onto local governments is not helpful; allow the regions to complete the SB 375 planning process consistent with its original parameters.

For more information: Kirstin Kolpitcke, Legislative Representative, [kkolpitcke@cacities.org](mailto:kkolpitcke@cacities.org) (916) 658-8250.