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League New Mayors and Council Members' Academy Brings Hundreds of City Officials to Sacramento for Education

League Officers Met with Legislative Leaders and Key Staff

Wednesday launched a very busy few days for the League of California Cities when approximately 450 elected mayors and council members came to the Capital city for three days of training. The annual event is designed to give newly elected city officials the information and skills they need to successfully lead their cities, including state-required AB 1234 Ethics Training. *For more, see Page 2.*



California City Solutions: Redwood City Improves Public Safety at Major Transit Hub, Shopping Center with Project SAFE

*This story is part of an ongoing series featuring Helen Putnam Award entries. The 2014 entries are available on the League's website as a resource for cities in a searchable database called [California City Solutions](#). Redwood City's Project Safe program was submitted in 2014 for the League Partners Award for Excellence in City-Business Relations award category. *For more, see Page 3.**



ILG Releases 2014 Annual Report

As 2014 came to a close, the Institute for Local Government (ILG) had the chance to reflect on what turned out to be a productive and exciting year for the organization. A few highlights include providing technical assistance for local agencies across the state, expanding the collaborations and partnerships program to include the Cities Counties Schools Partnership and the Summer Meal Coalition, and increasing local interest in sustainable communities and the Beacon Program. *For more, see Page 5.*

League Officers Met with State Leaders

League President and Scotts Valley Council Member Stephany Aguilar along with League First Vice President and Rancho Cucamonga Mayor L. Dennis Michael met with the Assembly leaders on Wednesday, as well as a number of legislators and representatives from Gov. Jerry Brown's Administration and the offices of the Senate's leadership. The officers used the opportunity to continue building strong relationships with state lawmakers and communicate the League's priority issues for 2015. Included in the meetings was Senate President pro Tempore Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles). The officers used the meetings to share the League's [strategic priorities](#), which address the need for new economic development tools, additional funding for transportation, continued pension reform, and other priorities.

New Mayors and Council Members' Academy Sessions Engage Newly Elected City Officials

The New Mayors and Council Members' Academy is traditionally a well-attended training, but this year brought record numbers of new mayors and council members to the event. Due to the event being sold out, for the first time, the League also [offered the sessions via telecast](#).

The conference sessions cover a wide range of policy topics and city council procedures. One of the most popular sessions occurred on Thursday when expert city attorneys conduct a skit contrasting the wrong and right ways to conduct city council meetings.

Ventura Council Member and League Mayors and Council Members' Department President Neal Andrews began the first session on Wednesday morning by welcoming the 400-plus newly elected city officials to Sacramento. He urged them to become involved in the League.

Dan Carrigg, the League's senior director of legislative affairs, gave an overview of the League's powerful advocacy efforts and stressed how the organization is successful through the engagement of California's mayors and council members. "City officials are the cornerstone of our political strength. You are our leaders," Carrigg told the audience.

Following Carrigg's remarks, the League's other five lobbyists briefed the audience on their core policy areas. Assistant Legislative Director Jennifer Whiting also introduced the League's team of regional public affairs managers who work on the ground in the League's 16 divisions.

League President Aguilar's comments to the new mayors and council members focused on the League's now 117-year history and the core mission to protect and strengthen local control. Aguilar, who has served on the Scotts Valley City Council for more than 18 years, stressed how integral city officials to League policy development. She also congratulated them on their recent election by saying: "You are embarking on an adventure of a lifetime."

Other session topics include:

- Legislative advocacy and key city issues;
- Legal powers and obligations;
- Land use planning;
- City council-city manager relationship;
- Communications and new media;
- Local government finance; and
- Ethics and the law.

Ethics Training

On Friday morning, the Institute for Local Government, the nonprofit research affiliate of the League and the California State Association of Counties, provided ethics training to the newly elected officials. AB 1234 requires that all newly elected and appointed officials must receive this training on specific ethics laws and principles within one year of becoming a public servant. This year's training was conducted by Mike Martello, a retired attorney who practiced municipal and

ethics laws for nearly 25 years. He also served as chair of the League's City Attorneys' Department's Fair Practices Campaign Committee.

Policy Committees Take Up Legislative Proposals for New Session

Thursday and Friday of this week, the League's eight policy committees held meetings in Sacramento to take up newly proposed policies and legislation. Each day began with a legislative briefing and state budget update from League Executive Director Chis McKenzie, League Senior Director of Legislative Affairs Dan Carrigg, Michael Coleman, the League's fiscal consultant, and other League lobbyists.

[Information and agendas](#) are available on the League's website.

'Redwood City' Continued from Page 1...

The Redwood City Police Department developed Project SAFE to address public safety concerns in the Sequoia Station Shopping Center and adjacent public transit hub. Launched in August 2013, the program uses a multi-faceted approach and is a collaboration of the police department, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Transit Police, the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, business owners, property management representatives, and mental health facilitators. Residents and commuters have acknowledged the increase in safety and quality of life since Project SAFE.

Sequoia Station and the neighboring transit center were experiencing blight and criminal activity ranging from public intoxication and aggressive panhandling to narcotics sales and physical assaults, associated with mental illness and homelessness. The police department created Project SAFE in response to complaints from residents, business owners, and commuters, and to maintain a dynamic problem-solving approach. The implementation of sustainable change became the primary focus during the project's development.

Prior to Project SAFE, the police department examined public safety factors in the affected area. The transit hub serves as a major rail line station in San Mateo County and hosts 72 trains of more than 40,000 rail commuters and a busing hub with 1,145 passengers daily. The Sequoia Station retail center serves a large segment of the mid-peninsula communities and is home to approximately 36 businesses.

The police department identified a number of issues affecting the retail and transit area including:

- **Crime and Disorder** — Criminal violations covering a range of issues. Some could be characterized as direct criminal conduct, however many issues related to conduct that was non-criminal in nature including mental health, homelessness and substance addiction.
- **Mental Health Issues** — Sequoia Station has been known as a gathering location for individuals who have received, or are currently receiving treatment for various mental health conditions. The police department learned that multiple mental health service providers and nearby residential care homes routinely sent or transported mental health clients to Sequoia Station in an attempt to facilitate their clients' societal acclimation. The most significant concern was whether these individuals were receiving the resources and appropriate supervision they needed.
- **Homelessness** — Police officers encounter homeless individuals at Sequoia Station on a daily basis although because it is not classified as criminal in nature, it is not addressed through criminal enforcement. A significant proportion of the homeless face mental health conditions and/or debilitating substance addictions. This population is often challenging to help since the nature of their disorders hinders their voluntary participation in treatment.
- **Mental Health and Homeless Advocacy Collaboration** — In order to prevent conflict with patrons, businesses, and others facing mental health conditions, the department set out to work with these service providers to ensure their accountability in the process.

Since these require different interventions, police department personnel have strived to address these problems with more holistic approaches designed to mitigate the underlying causes of criminal conduct through matching service efforts in lieu of arrests whenever possible. The police department established ongoing relationships with numerous mental health entities in order to produce consistency in operational protocols and a better joint effort among all stakeholders.

To more successfully place and support the homeless, wrap-around services and subsistence resources are applied when officers encounter those in need. The police department works with homeless advocacy services to boost placement rates. Stronger practices and in-field activities designed to pair services with prospective clients on the spot have reduced the homeless population.

- **Business Collaboration** — Tremendous incentives existed for businesses to become more aware of the circumstances affecting the climate at Sequoia Station. To accomplish this, the department worked closely with businesses to build strong and lasting partnerships to improve the fundamental environment, resulting in supportive business practices and an improved sense of security at Sequoia Station. This effort continues as additional businesses are introduced to concepts relating to employee and patron safety.

The police department has undertaken this task by first identifying key stakeholders and obtaining their input on their concerns and those of their patrons. Additionally, the department has sought commitments from businesses, which will ensure their involvement in all solutions and their long-term continuation. To help potentially influence this efforts success, patrol officers meet with and educate business owners and their employees about sound safety practices, reporting procedures, and other practices.

- **Interagency Collaboration** — While Sequoia Station is within the jurisdiction of the Redwood City Police Department, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Transit Police has concurrent jurisdiction over the transit hub. The police department and sheriff's office commit to focused patrols and participate in weekly planning meetings.

The police department and District Attorney's (DA) Office dedicated staff members to focus on emerging cases from the Sequoia Station enforcement activities. The DA's Office continues to evaluate enforcement plans to ensure they are meeting legal and constitutional requirements. Other city departments have helped re-design the shopping center's environment by removing tables and planter boxes, and making lighting improvements, which have proven to be successful in diminishing loitering.

Building collaborative relationships with mental health agencies, homeless advocacy services, business owners and other stakeholders has had a positive impact on the area's patrons. Many homeless individuals and others in need of treatment for alcohol and substance abuse have been paired with the appropriate support services. Expectations and agreements that were established between local mental health agencies and the police department have resulted in greater accountability associated with practices affecting mental health clients at Sequoia Station.

One of the objectives of collaborating with the local businesses in the area is to increase the accountability of private security resources. To accomplish this, police personnel provide free training to private security personnel working at Sequoia Station. Since Project SAFE started, some businesses have reported a 30-35 percent increase in sales, as well as a noticeable reduction in the theft of merchandise.

The efforts launched under the Project SAFE program have produced other favorable outcomes. A number of students from Sequoia High School, located just across the street, visit the center during school hours and an even larger number of youth loiter unsupervised at the conclusion of the school day. The police department's school resource officer began working more closely with the Sequoia High School administration to develop greater interoperability with regard to reducing truancy. Based on feedback provided by school administrators and nearby residents, youth-based criminal activity and engagement in the Project SAFE environment has been reduced and class attendance has increased at Sequoia High School, presenting a fiscal incentive to the school.

Building stronger relationships between criminal justice groups and social services has been a positive result of Project SAFE, producing greater performance within the criminal justice arena. Participating partners have been instrumental in helping to provide information to complete cases coming from enforcement activities at Sequoia Station. The early involvement in criminal prosecutions by DA's staff has ensured effective prosecutions while ensuring the rights and fair treatment of those contacted by police.

The department has also received numerous acknowledgements from Redwood City residents and commuters who frequent Sequoia Station signifying a noticeable improvement in the sense of safety and security at this location. Among the most important outcomes is the development of an effective multi-faceted approach to crime and blight, which will continue to act as a proven model for future challenges.

'ILG' Continued from Page 1...

ILG's [Annual Report](#) provides an overall view of these accomplishments in 2014. In addition, ILG's Public Engagement Program developed a [one-page snapshot of their work in 2014](#). ILG looks forward to continuing to collaborate with and be a resource for local governments across California in 2015 and beyond.

ILG is the research and education affiliate of the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities.

LA County Cities Have Until Jan. 21 to Comment on Proposed MS 4 Permit Petition

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is asking cities in Los Angeles County to review [a petition challenging the 2012 Los Angeles Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit \(MS 4\)](#). Cities that are concerned about their MS 4 permit and how this petition would affect them must comment by noon on Jan. 21.

[Electronic submission](#) of the written comments is encouraged by the State Water Board.

Written comments should be addressed to:

Jeanine Townsend, clerk to Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

The State Water Board will schedule the matter for final action at a subsequent meeting after consideration of received written comments.

U.S. Communities Offers Pharmaceutical, Medical Equipment and Supplies

Informational Webinars Offered on Jan. 20 and 23

The League of California Cities is excited to announce pharmaceutical, medical equipment and supplies products are now available through the U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance. Participating in this program can help drive savings and efficiencies with access to competitively bid national pharmaceutical and medical-surgical supply contracts that cover over 100,000 products.

Sponsored by the League of California Cities, U.S. Communities has awarded Premier a multi-year contract to provide a pharmaceutical, medical equipment, supplies and distribution program for U.S. Communities. This exclusive contract was awarded through a competitive solicitation process conducted by lead public agency, Dane County, Wisconsin.

Public entities must constantly save dollars, drive competitive bid processes and manage supplier relationships. To help manage these challenges, Premier has built this comprehensive program for pharmaceuticals (branded, generic and over-the-counter) and medical-surgical supplies. Premier has joined forces with key distribution partners, McKesson Medical-Surgical and AmerisourceBergen to help provide the best products at the lowest prices.

[U.S. Communities is offering two one-hour webinars](#) at no charge to members interested in learning more about how to take advantage of immediate savings through this new Premier program.

The Jan. 20 webinar will be held from 8-9 a.m. and the Jan. 23 webinar will be held from 10-11 a.m.

- [Register for the Jan. 20 webinar.](#)
- [Register for the Jan. 23 webinar.](#)

Please contact [U.S. Communities](#) for information if you are unable to participate in one of these upcoming webinars.