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IN THIS ISSUE:

Page 3: Registration Deadlines for Upcoming Planners and Public Works Officers Conferences Looming
NLC's 2016 Congressional City Conference Scheduled for March 5-9

Senate Passes League-Supported Medical Marijuana Clean-Up Legislation, Bill Moves Back to Assembly for Action

Monday afternoon the Senate voted 35-3 to pass AB 21 (Wood), the medical marijuana clean-up legislation that would eliminate the March 1, 2016 cultivation deadline. *For more, see Page 2.*



Governor Brown Delivers Short State of State, Continues to Caution Fiscal Restraint, Highlights Dire Need for Road Funding

Gov. Jerry Brown urged fiscal caution in his [2016 state of the state address](#) to the jointly assembled Senate and Assembly last Thursday, while highlighting the state's progress recovering from its most recent fiscal deficits, and increasing funding for schools and health care. The Governor did not propose any new policy proposals; instead he told lawmakers that California must prepare now for the inevitable recessions that occur frequently in the economic cycle. *For more, see Page 2.*



California Transportation Commission Defunds Projects Worth \$754 Million For Next Five Years

[The California Transportation Commission](#) (CTC) on Jan. 22 took action that approved a drastically reduced estimate of available funding for California's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in the next five years. The action slashes estimated funding by \$754 million, a hit that comes as California's state and local street, road and highway system is already crumbling under inadequate funding. *For more, see Page 2.*

'AB 21' Continued from Page 1...

AB 21 will now return to the Assembly, where the Assembly Local Government Committee will hear it this coming Wednesday. Assuming the bill is not amended further, it could be on the Assembly Floor for a final vote of the full body as soon as Thursday of this week. From there it will go directly to Gov. Jerry Brown's office for his consideration. As an urgency measure, it will take effect immediately upon the Governor's signature, lifting the March 1 deadline for local jurisdictions to have medical marijuana cultivation bans in effect.

Sen. Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg) presented his colleague's bill on the Senate Floor. The senator is the author of last year's SB 643, one of the bills that comprise the [Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act](#).

The Senate's action Monday followed the [Senate Health Committee's passage](#) of Assembly Member Jim Wood (D-Healdsburg) measure on Wednesday, Jan. 22.

'SOS' Continued from Page 1...

The Governor stressed the need for the state to focus on keeping existing funding commitments and repairing deteriorating infrastructure. "According to economists at the Department of Finance, the next recession, even if it were only of average intensity, would cut our revenues by \$55 billion over three years," said Brown. "That is why it is imperative to build up the Rainy Day Fund — which was recently overwhelmingly approved by the voters — and invest our temporary surpluses in badly needed infrastructure or in other ways that will not lock in future spending."

The Governor's remarks built off of the fiscally-cautious tone he set several weeks earlier when introducing his [proposed FY 2016-17](#) budget on Jan. 7, but he also reiterated the need for California to invest in its deteriorating roads.

"We have no choice but to maintain our transportation infrastructure," said Brown. "Yet, doing so without an expanded and permanent revenue source is impossible. That means at some point, sooner rather than later, we have to bite the bullet and enact new fees and taxes for this purpose. Ideology and politics stand in the way, but one way or another, the roads must be fixed."

The Governor's budget release and state of the state remarks set the tone for upcoming discussions with the Legislature over the budget. The Legislature is expected to propose expanded spending in various areas. Legislative hearings on the budget will continue into the spring, and be further informed when the Governor issues his revised FY 2016-17 budget proposal in early May. During this time, the stock market and the global economy will be closely monitored for signs of economic slowdown which could dampen the financial outlook at the state and local level.

[The League's analysis](#) of the Governor's proposal outlines significant proposals affecting programs of interest to cities. The League will continue to monitor state budget discussions and developments.

'Transportation' Continued from Page 1...

Like local governments, the CTC is struggling to meet transportation needs with less funding. The action last week comes after the CTC conducted thorough analysis anticipated additional reductions in a portion of the gasoline excise tax, the main source of state funding for the program. The tax dropped from 12 cents per gallon from 18 cents per gallon a few years ago. Under this next STIP, the price is anticipated to drop an additional 2 cents per gallon in FY 2016-17.

The reduction in the STIP will require the CTC to rescind funding previously committed and will have significant impacts. Projects included in the STIP include state highway, intercity rail, and transit improvements. The loss of funding from this one source will jeopardize billions of dollars of projects that rely on multiple funding sources. Projects improve traffic and air quality, and are major components of regional planning.

[The State Transportation Improvement Program](#) (STIP) is the CTC's five-year plan of future state highway, intercity rail and transit improvement programs. The CTC updates it every other year in even number years. CTC reports that a 1 cent reduction in the gas tax equates to \$140 million annually less to fund the local and state road system.

Registration Deadlines for Upcoming Planners and Public Works Officers Conferences Looming

Registration deadlines are approaching quickly for two of the League's premier educational events: the Planning Commissioners Academy, March 2-4 in San Ramon, and the Public Works Officers Institute & Expo, March 9-11 in Sacramento.

The registration and housing deadline for the Planning Commissioners Academy is Feb. 2, while the deadline for the Public Works Officers Institute is Feb. 16.

This year's Planning Commissioners Academy will feature sessions on fundamentals, for new commissioners, as well as sessions spotlighting emerging issues, intended for more experienced commissioners and city staff. Planned fundamentals sessions include findings and conditions of approval, civic engagement, demystifying CEQA, recognizing good design, a social media survival guide and how to conduct an effective planning commission meeting.

Emerging issues sessions will include streamlining the development review and permitting process, the future of water for California cities, complete streets, infill projects and autonomous vehicles. Other sessions will include looks at what planners need to know about municipal finance, California's growth patterns and making smart use of data.

[Register online.](#)

The Public Works Officers Institute & Expo will again mix practical and aspirational sessions. The schedule includes sessions on sustainable pavement, saving money through LED conversions, public outreach, solar PV and recycled water.

Attendees will also hear from astronaut Story Musgrave, Sacramento Bee political columnist Dan Walters and part of the team that helped the City of Napa respond — and rebuild — after the region's biggest earthquake in 25 years.

[Register online.](#)

NLC's 2016 Congressional City Conference Scheduled for March 5-9

Early Bird Registration Ends Jan. 31

The National League of Cities (NLC) is holding its annual Congressional City Conference in Washington, D.C. from March 5-9. Participants nationwide will engage and meet with U.S. Senate and House of Representative members and their staff to discuss federal policy issues of great importance to cities and local governments.

Similar to last year, the League will host a special briefing for U.S. House of Representatives staff on the League's Federal Priorities with a focus on Water Infrastructure. As the House will not be in session during the conference, the League encourages all California attendees to attend the briefing and connect with the staff of the representative. The time and place of the briefing will be announced in a future edition of CA Cities Advocate.

California attendees registered for the NLC Congressional City Conference are invited to attend the following events hosted by the League of California Cities:

League of California Cities Reception

Monday, March 7

6:00-7:30 p.m.

Thurgood Marshall East
Marriott Wardman Park Hotel
2660 Woodley Road, NW
Washington, D.C.

Request meetings with your legislators and their staff during your visit in Washington, D.C.
Visit the [Congressional City Conference](#) website for the latest information on this year's conference.

Register [online](#).
