

**July 22, 2016**  
**Issue #59**

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**U.S. Communities Holding Summit on Aug. 4 in Bakersfield to Educate Local Government Agency Officials on Program's Cost-Saving Benefits**  
*Additional Summits to be held in Long Beach and Napa/Sonoma*

U.S. Communities, the League of California Cities® and the California State Association of Counties sponsored government purchasing alliance, is hosting a free regional event on Aug. 4 at the Kern County Superintendent of Schools in Bakersfield to help public agencies learn how to save time and money through the U.S. Communities program. *For more, see Page 2.*



**Homeless Encampment Clean-Up Grant Applications Available**

Grant applications are now available for CalRecycle's Solid Waste Site Cleanup Program — funding that has been used successfully by cities to assist with the cleanup homeless encampments. Upcoming deadlines to apply for Illegal Disposal Site Abatement Grants are Aug. 2, Nov. 2 and Feb. 2. *For more, see Page 2.*



**California City Solutions: Hemet Develops Strategic Goals Based on Community Feedback**

*This story is part of an ongoing series featuring Helen Putnam Award entries. The 2015 entries are available on the League's website as a resource for cities in a searchable database called [California City Solutions](#). Hemet's customer engagement and strategic management plan was submitted in 2015 for the Internal Administration award category. *For more, see Page 3.**

## 'Summit' Continued from Page 1...

During this four-hour event you will be able to network, ask questions and share feedback:

- Learn when to use cooperative contracts;
- Connect with other local agencies currently using cooperative purchasing and find out what is working for their organization;
- Learn about the online e-commerce marketplace;
- Meet your local U.S. Communities program manager; and
- Connect with U.S. Communities suppliers to learn about and receive their lowest overall government pricing for these products and services:
  - Facilities
  - Office and school solutions
  - Technology
  - Parks and recreation
  - Specialty

This educational event will be of special interest to:

- Assistant city managers;
- Public safety officials;
- Parks and recreation officials;
- Public works directors;
- Facilities managers;
- Fleet managers; and
- Procurement officers.

### Event Details

Thursday, Aug. 4, 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Meeting will be held at the Kern County Superintendent of Schools, 1300 17th Street, Room 1B in Bakersfield.

[Register online](#). Lunch will be provided.

### Future Summits

U.S. Communities will be holding summits in Southern and Northern California:

- Late September: Long Beach. [Information coming soon.](#)
- Late October: Napa/Sonoma. [Information coming soon.](#)

### About U.S. Communities

The U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance, a strategic partner of the League of California Cities, is a government purchasing cooperative that reduces the cost of goods and services by aggregating the purchasing power of public agencies nationwide. U.S. Communities provides world class procurement resources and solutions to local and state government agencies, school districts (K-12), higher education, and nonprofits. State and local governments have access to a broad line of competitively solicited contracts with best in class national suppliers.

Learn more about U.S. Communities at [www.uscommunities.org/lcc](http://www.uscommunities.org/lcc).

For more information about the summits, please contact [Rob Fiorilli](#) from U.S. Communities at (925) 588-5054 or [Norman Coppinger](#) from the League of California Cities at (916) 658-8277.

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## 'Grants' Continued from Page 1...

Through the Illegal Disposal Site Abatement Grant program, CalRecycle allocates up \$1 million per year to public entities, with a maximum of \$500,000 per grant. Matching funds are not required. Additional information is available on the [CalRecycle website](#).

Among recent recipients of the Illegal Disposal Site Abatement Grants were the cities of Santa Rosa and Petaluma, which used the funding as part of their larger efforts to address homelessness. Much of the CalRecycle funding was used to clean up encampments generating trash and waste that ended up in the creeks and other waterways in those communities.

In prioritizing sites to receive available funding, CalRecycle considers the following:

- Degree of risk to public health and safety and the environment;
- Ability of the owner to clean up the site without monetary assistance;
- CalRecycle's ability to adequately remediate the site with available funds;
- Amount of contributions of money and/or in-kind services from governments or responsible parties; and
- Ability to obtain site access.

Illegal Disposal Site Abatement Grants are one of four portions of CalRecycle's Solid Waste Site Cleanup Program.

Created in 1994, the Solid Waste Site Cleanup Program aims to address the cleanup of solid waste disposal sites for which the responsible party cannot be identified or is unable or unwilling to pay for timely cleanup needed to protect public health, public safety or the environment.

Three other types of funding are available:

- **CalRecycle-Managed Cleanup:** CalRecycle is authorized to spend funds directly to investigate and/or remediate sites where the responsible party (public and in some cases private) is unwilling or willing but does not have the necessary resources or expertise to implement the cleanup in a timely manner.
- **Legacy Disposal Site Abatement Grant:** Public entities may receive financial assistance in the form of reimbursement grants up to \$750,000 to assist with remediating old solid waste disposal sites and protecting public health and safety and the environment.
- **Loans to Local Governments:** Loans up to \$1,000,000 per site are available to local governments that demonstrate that site remediation is needed to protect public health and safety and the environment and that the local government has the ability to repay the loan.

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Hemet's General Fund revenues dropped by 29 percent during the recession, which prompted service reductions as well as a 31 percent reduction in staffing. Despite those expenditure cuts, Hemet continues to operate with a structural budget deficit. In 2013, city leaders concluded that closing the deficit would require either further service reductions, taxpayer approval of additional revenues, or both. However, when input from the city's customers was most needed many departments had no customer feedback mechanism and the public had little data to evaluate their value of their services. This need prompted the city to launch what has become a successful effort to bring residents into the city's planning process.

The city decided to implement a two-pronged strategy in February 2014 to engage the community in evaluating city services and inform them of the how their tax dollars are being put to use. The city manager first directed all city departments to regularly solicit point-of-service customer feedback using a customer survey designed by the city's executive team. The [survey](#) can be completed as a hard copy or electronically, after the city services are rendered. The completed customer surveys are summarized quarterly, reviewed by the entire executive team, and posted on the city's website.

The second strategy focuses on a Strategic Management Program in which every city department established a mission statement, goals, measurable objectives, performance indicators, and performance targets. Performance data is reported quarterly, showing every performance objective and whether the city is meeting its performance targets or falling short. This

performance data is reviewed by the entire executive team and is also posted on the city's website.

Just 37 individuals responded to the survey initially, which was much less than staff had hoped would be submitted. However, as departments placed greater emphasis on requesting feedback and increased its response rate, the volume greatly increased. In the 13 months after customer surveying was implemented, 1,509 surveys were completed with 91 percent of the residents rating the quality of services as a "4" or "5" on a five-point scale, where "1" means poor and "5" means excellent. The customer ratings and additional comments have been very helpful to the city in identifying where it meets customer expectations and where it can improve.

The quarterly reporting of how the city is performing in relation to its performance targets has set a high standard for accountability and transparency. It has also given the city's executive team a performance dashboard it had not previously had to evaluate its service performance and identify where intervention is needed to improve outcomes. The performance objectives and targets also enhance the annual budget process by quantifying what the community can expect in terms of the services it provides for the resources invested in them.

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### **CalPERS Invites Nominations for its Spotlight on Excellence Award**

The 2016 CalPERS' Educational Forum is coming up in October and the nomination period is now open for the Spotlight on Excellence award. This honor recognizes an outstanding public agency, a specific program, or an individual employee who has:

- Exhibited the spirit of what it means to be of service to the public;
- Served as a model other agencies or employees can follow; and
- Had success in building up their community.

Nominations will be reviewed and the winner will be honored with an award on Oct. 24 at the Riverside Convention Center. The winner will also be featured in the CalPERS Employer News newsletter and social media. Neither the recipient nor the nominators necessarily have to be paid registrants at the Educational Forum.

Nominations may be [submitted online](#).

Questions can be directed to [David Teykaerts](#).

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### **CalPERS Names Marcie Frost as New Chief Executive Officer**

The [California Public Employees' Retirement System](#) (CalPERS) Board of Administration announced last week that it has named Marcie Frost as the pension fund's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Frost, 51, is a 16-year veteran of the pension industry, having most recently served as the executive director of the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). She will start her new role with CalPERS on Oct. 3, replacing Anne Stausboll who retired at the end of June. Doug Hoffner will serve in the interim.

As CEO, Frost will oversee the system's operations, which include 2,870 employees, a budget of more than \$1.7 billion, and programs spanning retirement benefits administration, health care delivery, investments, finance and risk management, actuarial services, supplemental retirement programs, legislative affairs, stakeholder relations, and numerous support functions.

Frost's career spans executive level positions in public pension administration, human resources and information technology. She joined DRS in 2000 and held leadership roles in human resources, information services, and operations. She was deputy director for the retirement systems for four years before being appointed executive director in 2013. She also serves as an ex officio member of the Washington State Investment Board.

She began her public service career as a Benefits Administrator with the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries managing compensation and benefit programs for public employees across 26 locations. Frost is a native Washingtonian and is pursuing dual bachelors and master's degree in public administration from Evergreen State College.

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## **Funding Opportunity: NLC's CHAMPS Grant Helps Cities Fund After School and Summer Lunch Programs**

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) and the League of California Cities® are working with National League of Cities (NLC) to provide support to cities interested in strengthening efforts to ensure youth stay healthy, engaged and on a positive developmental path.

NLC's Cities Combating Hunger through After School and Summer Meal Programs (CHAMPS) is a grant opportunity for cities to ensure low-income youth continue to have access to healthy food when school is out.

City agencies in California are eligible to apply for \$5,000-\$40,000 grants and technical assistance to enhance their efforts to combat childhood hunger when school is out through [USDA summer and after school meal programs](#). These grant funds can be used to support activities (through December 2017) such as: youth employment, promotional activities, operational needs and other supports that increase access to out-of-school-time meal programs.

[Apply online](#).

If you have questions contact NLC's [Jamie Nash](#) or ILG's [Patrice Chamberlain](#).

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## **Economic Development, Public Safety Top Issues for Nation's Mayors, According to National League of Cities Report**

*Economic Development Remains Most Critical Issue for Third Consecutive Year*

For the third consecutive year, economic development remained the top issue for the nation's mayors, according to a comprehensive analysis of mayoral state of the city speeches released today by the [National League of Cities](#) (NLC). In the [2016 State of the Cities](#) report, which examines state of the city speeches in 100 cities representing a diverse cross section of population sizes and geographic regions, public safety replaced infrastructure as the second most-discussed issue. The state of the city speech is a mayor's opportunity to reflect on their city's recent accomplishments, address current challenges and present a roadmap for the future.

As the biggest issue on mayors' agendas, economic development was mentioned in 75 percent of mayoral speeches. Following closely behind is public safety and city budgets at 70 percent and 52 percent, respectively. The full list of top issues for 2014, 2015 and 2016 are available in the [report](#).

This year's State of the Cities report reveals the following trends:

- Mayors continue to focus on improving their local economies and encouraging entrepreneurship;
  - Mayors are seeing improved revenue and are being judicious about how to spend it;
  - Mayors are cautiously optimistic about the future and are leading in the development of sustainable communities where people want to live;
  - Mayors are concerned about the uptick in the murder rate even though overall crime rates are historically low;
  - Mayors are concerned about the increasing opioid epidemic; and
  - Mayors are helping their cities see the value of using technology and data to drive decisions and make their city governments more efficient and effective.
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## Submit Your Application for What Cities Work

[What Works Cities](#) (WWC) invites cities to apply to be part of a national Bloomberg Philanthropies initiative to help American cities better use data and evidence to drive decision-making and improve residents' lives. WWC will be working with 100 cities with populations between 100,000 and 1 million people who are committed to improving the way they use data in governance and service delivery.

Bloomberg Philanthropies has assembled an unparalleled group of leading practitioners to help cities focus on their goals and their citizens including the [Behavioral Insights Team](#), the [Center for Government Excellence at Johns Hopkins University](#), the [Government Performance Lab at the Harvard Kennedy School](#), [Results for America](#), and the [Sunlight Foundation](#).

[Applications](#) must be submitted online by Aug. 1.

Any questions can be directed by email to [info@whatworkscities.org](mailto:info@whatworkscities.org).

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