



Jan. 13, 2017
Issue #3

Registration Open for the 2017 Public Works Officers Institute & Expo

Don't miss your opportunity to attend the 2017 Public Works Officers Institute & Expo, which is scheduled March 22–24 at the Paradise Point San Diego. Friday, Feb. 24 is the registration deadline, but the conference is highly likely to sell out before that date. *For more, see Page 2.*



U.S. Communities Announces New Contract for Auto Parts and Accessories

U.S. Communities, the League of California Cities® and the California State Association of Counties sponsored government purchasing alliance, is excited to continue a partnership with Advance Auto Parts through the award of the [auto parts and accessories contract](#). *For more, see Page 2.*



California City Solutions: Concord Saves Community Favorite Music and Market Series with Creative Plan

This story is part of an ongoing series featuring Helen Putnam Award entries. The 2016 entries are available on the League's website as a resource for cities in a searchable database called [California City Solutions](#). Concord's Music and Market Series was submitted in 2016 for the League Partners Award for Excellence in the Community Services and Economic Development award category. For more, see Page 2.

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Designed for professionals of all career levels, this institute offers education on the latest developments in public works, leadership, managing transportation, infrastructure, water, waste programs and [more](#).

This year's conference includes:

- Two and a half days of important [educational sessions](#);
- Opening general session on Adapting, Succeeding, and Thriving in Public Works with Sarita Maybin, former TedX speaker;
- Wednesday reception with expo, Thursday breakfast and lunch, and Friday breakfast; and
- Electronic access to all program materials.

[Register online](#).

The full announcement with schedule and complete session information will be mailed early next week.

For questions about this event, please contact [Katie Sacco](#) at (916) 658-8251.

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This exclusive contract was awarded by lead public agency, city of Charlotte, North Carolina. The contract began Jan. 1 for a three-year term with the option to extend the contract for two additional two-year periods.

"As part of the competitive re-solicitation, Advance was selected based on their proposal which offered a great value and the most advantageous solution for public agencies to procure quality automotive products and services at competitive prices," said Karen Ewing, deputy chief procurement officer for the city of Charlotte, North Carolina. Start ordering with this new contract to take advantage of 600,000 products with competitive pricing that includes tiered volume discounts.

To learn more, register for a [complimentary 30-minute webinar](#) or [contact U.S. Communities](#) for additional information.

Webinars

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 8 a.m.

[Register online](#)

Wednesday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m.

[Register online](#)

For additional information on Experian or the U.S. Communities Government Purchasing Alliance visit www.uscommunities.org or contact [Amanda Cadelago](#) with the League at (916) 658-8226.

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.

Concord is the largest city in Contra Costa County with a diverse population approaching 130,000 people. Its historic downtown dates back to 1868 and is centered on Todos Santos Plaza in the heart of the city. The revitalization of the historic downtown district has been a priority for the last 30 years after many businesses relocated to shopping malls in the 1960s and 70s. In 1988, Concord's Redevelopment Agency established a Music and Market program held in the Todos Santos Plaza as an economic development strategy to bring people back to Concord's downtown. After the state abolished redevelopment agencies in 2011, the city designed a plan to save the community-loved Music and Market.

Todos Santos Plaza is a block square park in the center of downtown. Through the collaborative efforts of the Concord's Redevelopment Agency and the Pacific Coast Farmers' Market, the program grew from its modest beginnings when the first concert debuted to just 100 people. Over the years the Music and Market series developed to become one of the area's most vibrant, popular and professionally run civic music scenes, attracting 1,500 to 5,000 people per concert. Families of diverse backgrounds came to enjoy an array of eclectic musical groups, a large farmer's market and an event to meet others in the community.

Not only did the Music and Market series attract residents and out-of-town visitors, but it encouraged many new businesses to establish in Concord's thriving downtown. In addition, existing property owners were encouraged by the downtown revival and invested in their properties and updated their buildings.

When the state eliminated all redevelopment agencies in 2011, the future of Concord's Music and Market program was in jeopardy. The city considered funding the series with its General Fund, but the Great Recession caused the city to cut staffing by 25 percent, reduce police services, postpone road repair and maintain all city services at minimum levels. Funding a free downtown program after all the cuts to services was not possible.

Many of Concord's downtown business owners voiced concerns, anxious to find a way to save this series fearing that loss of the program would translate into loss of business. Residents expressed their disappointment in learning that one of the community's favorite summer events may be cancelled. Determined to save the series, the Concord City Council needed a creative solution.

The city's Community and Economic Development team took up the task of finding a way to [save the Music and Market Series](#). Staff developed a three pronged strategy to help keep it going:

1. Businesses would contribute through a sponsorship program;
2. Residents would contribute through donations; and
3. The city would contribute by funding one staff person to manage the program.

Through a partnership with business organizations, staff members created a sponsorship program that offered several benefits, with the main one being marketing space on the city's street light poles, letting commercial logos be displayed prominently on street banners.

The program consists of three sponsorship levels, formal recognition at a city council meeting, recognition at a special Music and Market concert night, VIP seating for guests of the sponsor's choosing, and introduction and remarks by the sponsor on stage. Some sponsors utilize their night in the park for employee or client recognition.

The three levels of sponsorship are:

1. The Silver Package at \$10,000, which includes 10 banners;
2. The Gold Package at \$20,000 which includes 20 banners; and
3. The Platinum Package at \$50,000, which provides 25 banners that will display throughout Concord for two years instead of one, and two evenings of presence in the plaza during a Music and Market event.

Additionally, individual night sponsorships at \$5,000 are offered to Concord business owners for a presence in the plaza during one of the Music and Market Series concerts.

Residents participated by mailing in a donation to the city or by contributing at the concerts through a "pass the jug" effort, facilitated by the city's elected and appointed officials. The donations during the concerts exceeded expectations and eventually required a police escort to assure that the money was safely deposited at the end of each concert.

The city contributes its share to the partnership by assuming the salary and benefit costs for the staff person in charge of organizing and managing the series, a cost that was formerly funded fully by the redevelopment program.

In its first year, banner sponsorships raised approximately \$40,000 to fund the Music and Market series. Several companies throughout the city started taking interest in the program as its popularity increased. Today, Concord enjoys a minimum \$200,000 in annual sponsorships and community grants, most of which are booked a year in advance and include all levels of the banner packages and individual night sponsorships. Community donations total approximately \$20,000 a year. The revenue from the program outpaces the \$180,000 funding received from the originally supported redevelopment program.

An indirect benefit of saving the concert program is the impact on business attraction. In 2014 a craft beer pub called the Hop Grenade opened across from Todos Santos Plaza. The owners relocated from Martinez to Concord because of the music events in the plaza. Hop Grenade is also headquarters for the owner's homebrew oriented internet radio station that reaches thousands of listeners nationwide. The new addition has greatly added to Concord's growing reputation as a craft beer hub and has attracted other pubs and breweries to the community.

The popularity of the series also led to more and more people coming downtown even when there are no events in the park. This excitement has been the basis for new investment in the area including a popular Off the Grid Food Truck Night that has been established on Monday evenings; the addition of outdoor sidewalk seating for more restaurants around the plaza; and the city's replacement of rundown lights in the trees around the plaza.

The Music and Market Series continues to draw new business ventures to the downtown area with the attraction of nearly 200,000 visitors each year and functions as an instrument for economic development in the city of Concord.
