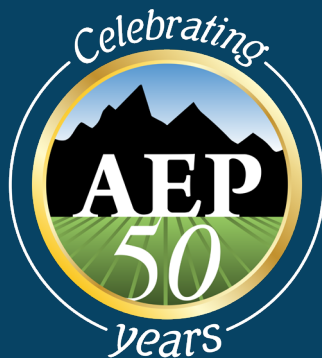


AEP 2024 CONFERENCE



JW MARRIOTT ANAHEIM | MARCH 24-27, 2024

AEP Conference Program





Thank you Sponsors

AEP California State Conference 2024



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Welcome Message from the AEP President

Welcome to the 2024 Association of Environmental Professionals Annual Conference! This is an exceptional year for AEP as we celebrate 50 years! Please join me in thanking our Conference Chairs, Konnie Dobreva, E|P|D Solutions, Brian Allee, ESA and Christina Maxwell, HNTB and the Conference Committee for their hard work, organization, and leadership in making this Conference a huge success. The 2024 team put forth tremendous effort to make this conference the best to date. They have planned an outstanding schedule of sessions and events to challenge and inspire our thinking, support our professional development, and to allow us to have some fun and expand our networks.



We also cannot forget the tireless efforts of Lynne Bynder, CMP our Executive Director and Candace Davis, our Operations Director who makes our conferences a success year after year.

Finally, we all extend our gratitude to our many sponsors. Without their support the conference would not be possible.

We hope you enjoy the conference and make time to experience the exciting City of Anaheim.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M Fogg". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Mindy Fogg
AEP President



Opening Keynote Speakers

Monday
8:00 am – 8:45 am
Credits: AICP .75
Room: Arbor E, F, G

Joe Haupt, CEO and President, Spectrum Development Group

Joe Haupt. Joe is the CEO & President of Spectrum Development Group, a leading real estate development and real estate services firm focusing primarily in the hospitality sector. Over his 25 year career, Joe has been responsible for the conception, pre-development, and construction of billions of dollars of hospitality and entertainment related projects in the United States and internationally. Spectrum Development Group has developed and owns hospitality assets in the southwest. SDG's services line of business provides third party real estate development services from entitlement to construction management for leading names in the entertainment, hotel, resort, timeshare, and gaming space.

Joe has Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Southern California and is licensed as a Real Estate Broker (DRE # 01927781) in the State of California.

Jennifer Marks, Principal, Psomas

Jennifer Marks. Jen is a Principal and Vice President of Environmental Services at Psomas. She graduated in 1999 from Humboldt State University with a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources Planning and Interpretation and began her career as an Environmental Analyst with BonTerra Consulting, a small woman-owned firm. After an acquisition by Psomas in 2013, Jen now leads a team of environmental planners and technical specialists who specialize in the preparation of CEQA and NEPA documents and related technical studies, and provide construction mitigation monitoring.

Jen has prepared and managed environmental compliance processes for a wide mix of project types including infrastructure, transportation, planned communities, recreation, and visitor-serving uses. Of particular interest, Jen has consistently worked on projects in and with the City of Anaheim, having at least one Anaheim-based project active each year since 2000. In particular, Jen has prepared CEQA documentation for the Anaheim Resort Specific Plan, numerous hotels in the City, and most recently led the preparation of the Subsequent EIR for the Disneyland-Forward Project.

Topic:

DisneylandForward is a multiyear public planning effort to update the Disneyland Resort's existing development approvals that will allow Disney to meaningfully invest in Anaheim for decades to come and meet the future demands in entertainment. The City released a Draft Subsequent EIR for public review in September 2013 and is considering Project approval and certification of the Subsequent EIR in April 2024.

Tuesday
8:00 am – 8:45 am
Room: Arbor E, F, G



Tuesday Keynote Speaker

Christine Sanders, Christine Sanders and Associates

Ms. Saunders has over twenty years of experience in both the public and private sectors in city planning and CEQA analysis for development projects in Southern California. In her current role, she is the Director of Entitlement and Development Services for OCVIBE, a 100-acre, vibrant mixed-use and entertainment district surrounding the Honda Center in Anaheim. She successfully managed a three-year entitlement effort to gain Anaheim City Council approval for the project in 2022. Christine continues to lead the team of design professionals as the project evolves during construction and to guide the long-term development aspirations of the organization. Saunders earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban Studies with emphasis in Public Administration from San Diego State University and is the immediate past Section Director of the Inland Empire Section of the American Planning Association (IES-APA).

Project Blurb

OCVIBE will transform the surface parking lots around the Honda Center and ARTIC- the landmark regional transportation center- into a vibrant mixed-use and entertainment district that will include creative offices, a food/market hall and multiple restaurant offerings, retail storefronts, a state-of-the-art concert venue, two hotels, 1,500 residential units including 15% affordable housing, 20 acres of parks and open space, internal pedestrian circulation including an iconic pedestrian bridge over Katella Avenue, and improvements to bicycle and vehicular circulation with a new network of streets and bicycle facilities.





MOBILE Workshops



MW #1: Anaheim Historic District Tour

Tuesday, March 26th | 9am-1pm | \$35

Join Planners from the City of Anaheim for a guided van tour through the City's historic Anaheim Colony and Anaheim Packing Districts. The tour includes a stop at Founder's Park, the site of two houses on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as a walking tour of the historic Packing District. The tour will conclude at 11 am, allowing time for you to explore and have lunch at the Packing House on your own. Transportation back to the hotel will be provided at 12:30 pm.



MW #2: Crystal Cove State Park & Historic District Tour

Tuesday, March 26th | 1:30-4:30pm | \$50

The Crystal Cove State Park and Historic District is a unique example of the intersection between habitat conservation and historic preservation. The 4,000-acre State Park has 2,400 acres of backcountry wilderness, 3.2 miles of beach, and offshore underwater habitat, all of which are popular with outdoor enthusiasts. The Park's critical habitats are home to endangered plants, threatened animals, and rare birds – many of which can only be found in coastal Southern California. The federally listed Historic District is an enclave of 46 vintage rustic coastal cottages originally built as a seaside colony in the 1930s & 40s. The District is considered a historic coastal treasure and is one of the last remaining well-preserved examples of early 20th century Southern California coastal development and vernacular beach architecture. In recent years, California State Parks and the Crystal Cove Conservancy completed Phases I and II of restoration in the Historic District, which includes cottages for visitor services, educational and community programs, a restaurant, and overnight use by the public. Thus far, twenty-eight cottages and one Japanese language schoolhouse have been fully restored, while the remaining seventeen cottages are scheduled for restoration in the coming years as part of Phase III restoration. Kate Wheeler, President and CEO, and Hallie Jones, Executive Vice President and Chief Programs Officer of the Crystal Cove Conservancy will lead a walking tour of the Historic District. The tour will begin with an overview of the Historic District and Conservancy and will highlight the history of the cottages and their current uses. The tour will then focus on the un-restored North Beach cottages, which are located along a newly constructed beach promenade. Background information will be provided on the past and current efforts responsible for preserving the cottages and surrounding habitat. After the tour, attendees are encouraged to take in the beautiful scenery, spend some time relaxing on the beach, explore the Historic District, or get a milkshake and some food at Ruby's Shake Shack. Note: Lunch is on your own.

Thank you to the AEP 2024 Conference Committee

Conference Co-Chairs:

Konnie Dobreva, E|P|D Solutions, Konnie@epdsolutions.com

Brian Allee, ESA, ballee@esassoc.com

Christina Maxwell, HNTB, cmaxwell@hntb.com

Track Chairs:

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices) Alex Garber, EPD Solutions, alex@epdsolutions.com

Surfing the Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates) Alisha Winterswyk, BBK Law alisha.winterswyk@bbklaw.com

Bracing for New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure) Meaghan Truman, EPD Solutions, mtruman@epdsolutions.com

Making a Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency) Virginia Gomez, virginia.gomez@ocpw.ocgov.com

Winding Roads (AQ/GHG/VMT) Pierre Glaize, ICF, pierre.glaize@icf.com

Mobile Workshop Chair:

Cameron Hile, MIG, cameronh@migcom.com

Student Volunteer Chair:

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Grant Reddy, AEP Graphic Designer, PlaceWorks, greddy@placeworks.com





2024 Conference-at-a-Glance

5 Session Tracks:

- » [A Path through the Orange Groves](#)
- » [Surfing the Waves](#)
- » [Bracing for New Heights](#)
- » [Making a Splash](#)
- » [Winding Roads](#)



2024 California State Conference

Conference-at-a-Glance

Sunday, March 24, 2024

11:30 am – 6:30 pm	Conference Registration – <i>West Prefunction</i>					
12:00 N – 5:00 pm	Exhibitor Set-up – <i>East and West Prefunction</i>					
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	<p>SURFING THE WAVES</p> <p>Surprise! There's Contamination: Don't Let Hazards Surprise You</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</p> <p>Planning for the Future: The Intersection of Water Supply, RHNA, and Regional Stormwater Capture and Reuse Projects</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p>MAKING A SPLASH</p> <p>Diversifying the Environmental and Planning Industry through Internship Programs - Milestones and Lessons Learned</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p>WINDING ROADS</p> <p>Air Quality and Climate Change Workshop</p> <p>*Note: This session is from 1:30 pm – 4:45 pm</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>		
3:15 pm – 4:45 pm	<p>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</p> <p>Environmental Planning 101: Soft Skills for Planners</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>	<p>SURFING THE WAVES</p> <p>Make Some Noise about Noise Analysis</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</p> <p>Rage Against the (Internal Combustion) Machine: Role of Public Agency in Supporting and Deploying Zero Emissions Vehicle</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p>MAKING A SPLASH</p> <p>Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Paving a Strategic Path Forward to Advance the Environmental Profession</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p>WINDING ROADS</p> <p>Air Quality and Climate Change Workshop</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	
4:45 pm – 5:30 pm	New Member, 1st Timer Reception – <i>Tranquility Garden</i>					
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Opening Reception Featuring the AEP Jam Band – <i>Serenity Garden</i> – (Sponsors: Placeworks, Harris and Associates)					

Monday, March 25, 2024

7:30 am – 6:00 pm	Registration – <i>West Prefunction</i>
7:30 am – 6:30 pm	Exhibits Open – <i>East and West Prefunction</i>
7:30 am – 8:45 am	Continental Breakfast – <i>Exhibit Area</i> – (Sponsor: MNS Engineers, Inc.)
8:00 am – 8:45 am	<p>Opening Keynote Speakers – Disneyland Forward – (Credits: AICP .75) Room: Arbor E, F, G</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joe Haupt, CEO and President, Spectrum Development Group • Jennifer Marks, Principal, Psomas <p>(Sponsors: Dudek, Remy Moose Manley, LLP)</p>

Monday, March 25, 2024 (Continued)

<p>9:00 am – 10:30 am</p>	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u> Plan It Right: Deciphering the VMT Riddle in Tomorrow’s General Plans Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u> Thanks for the Input: Best Practices for the Peer Review Process Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u> Navigating California’s Affordable Housing Maze: From Laws to Lumber Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u> Climate Action Planning with Federal Funding Support Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u> Hydrogen as a Transportation Fuel: How Will this Technology Impact AQ and GHG Analyses in CEQA Project Case Studies? Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>
<p>10:45 am – 12:15 pm</p>	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u> Navigating the Twists and Turns: Environmental Review for Transportation Projects Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u> Green Tape Gets a Snip: CEQA Compliance for Restoration Projects Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u> Ready! Set! Go!: Determining Evacuation Impacts Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u> Imperial County’s Renewable Future: Transforming the Valley from Agriculture to a Green Economy Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u> Miles Ahead: Advancing VMT Impact Analysis for Better Outcomes (A Conversation with ARB and Caltrans) Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>
<p>12:15 pm – 1:45 pm</p>	<p>Membership Update/AEP 50th Anniversary Luncheon – Arbor E, F, G – (Sponsors: HELIX Environmental, Riverside County Flood Control)</p>				
<p>1:45 pm – 3:15 pm</p>	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u> CEQA Law and Ethics Credits: AICP Law 1.5, AICP Ethics 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u> Say What? How to Effectively Respond to Public Comments Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u> Carbon Neutral Communities Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u> Breaking Down Silos: Implementing Climate Action Plans through a Whole of Government Approach Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u> Conserving Land, Conserving Miles: Land Conservation as a VMT Mitigation Strategy Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>
<p>3:15 pm – 3:45 pm</p>	<p>Take a Sponsor Break – Exhibit Area</p>				
<p>3:45 pm – 5:15 pm</p>	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u> Understanding the Complex Evolution and Practice of AB 52: Tribal Consultation and Cooperative Mitigation Strategies Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u> Groundwater in the Face of CEQA, Case Law, and Sustainability Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u> Dissecting CEQA Streamlining and Subsequent Review: How to Understand It, Embrace It, and Make It Work for You Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u> Coastal Resilience Master Planning: Protecting Southern California’s Coastline from the Effects of Sea Level Rise Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u> What is the Value of Reducing VMT? EVs, Changing GHG Emissions, and Other Benefit Considerations Over Time Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>
<p>5:30 pm – 7:00 pm</p>	<p>Awards Reception – Exhibit Area – (Sponsors: HNTB, Impact Sciences)</p>				
<p>6:00 pm – 7:00 pm</p>	<p>AEP 2024 Awards Program – Room: Arbor E, F, G – (Sponsor: AECOM)</p>				

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

7:30 am – 8:45 am	Continental Breakfast – <i>Exhibit Area</i> – (Sponsor: MNS Engineers, Inc.)					
8:00 am – 6:00 pm	Registration – <i>West Prefunction</i>					
8:00 am – 6:30 pm	Exhibits Open – <i>East and West Prefunction</i>					
8:00 am – 8:45 am	Keynote Speaker – OC Vibe - <i>Christine Sanders, Christine Sanders and Associates</i> – Room: Arbor E, F, G (Sponsor: Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group)					
9:00 am – 1:00 pm	Mobile Workshop #1 – Anaheim Historic District Tour – (Additional fee of \$35) (Meet at Valet)					
9:00 am – 10:30 am	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u></p> <p>Beyond “Comment Noted” - Improving Your Responses to Comments and Meaningful Community Input in CEQA</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u></p> <p>Stable Foundations: Current Trends in Project Descriptions</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u></p> <p>Successful Mitigation of VMT Impacts for an Infill Residential Project</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u></p> <p>AI, AI, OhhhhhMG! How Environmental Professionals are Using Artificial Intelligence Right Now on Projects</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u></p> <p>How Best to Craft and Use a Climate Action Plan for CEQA Streamlining</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>	
10:45 am – 12:15 pm	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u></p> <p>Creative Solutions: Compensatory Mitigation When Bank Credits are Scarce</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u></p> <p>Complying with CEQA’s Wildfire Analysis Requirements</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u></p> <p>Utilities and Service Systems: The Crossover of CEQA and Engineering for Large Planning Projects</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u></p> <p>A Toolbox Approach to CEQA and Permitting for Wildfire Resiliency Projects</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor A</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u></p> <p>Planning for the Unexpected: Lessons Learned from a Flood Control Perspective</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u></p> <p>VMT Analysis - Off the Test Track and On the Road</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor D</p>
12:15 pm – 1:30 pm	Lunch on Your Own					
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Mobile Workshop #2 – Crystal Cove State Park & Historic District – (Additional fee of \$50) (Meet at Valet)					
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u></p> <p>The Newport Bay Water Wheel: A New Idea for Keeping Trash Out of Sensitive Habitat</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u></p> <p>CEQA Trivia</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u></p> <p>From Roadblocks to Solutions: Aligning Housing and Climate Goals through Suburban Infill Development and VMT Mitigation</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>MAKING A SPLASH</u></p> <p>Adaptation and Resiliency Implications for Changing Regional and Local Climates</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor C</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u></p> <p>A Warehouse of CEQA Knowledge: Air Quality and GHG Emissions Impact Analysis Considerations for Large Warehouse Projects</p> <p>Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>	
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Take a Sponsor Break – <i>Exhibit Area</i>					

Tuesday, March 26, 2024 (Continued)

<p>3:30 pm – 5:00 pm</p>	<p><u>A PATH THROUGH THE ORANGE GROVES</u> Mitigation Magic: Beyond Just a Nexus and Rough Proportionality to an Impact Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Orchard 2</p>	<p><u>SURFING THE WAVES</u> How Adjacent is Adjacent? An Update on the Definition of Waters of the U.S. Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Orchard 1</p>	<p><u>BRACING FOR NEW HEIGHTS</u> CEQA vs Tsunami of Housing Laws Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0 Room: Arbor B</p>	<p><u>WINDING ROADS</u> Greenhouse Gas Thresholds: Warehouse Best Management Practices Credits: AICP 1.5 Room: Arbor D</p>
<p>5:15 pm – 7:00 pm</p>	<p>Wine and Cheese Reception – Exhibit Area – (Sponsors: Sapphos Environmental, Inc., SWCA)</p>			

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

<p>8:30 am – 10:00 am</p>	<p>Registration – West Prefunction</p>
<p>8:30 am – 10:00 am</p>	<p>Exhibits Open – East and West Prefunction</p>
<p>8:30 am – 10:00 am</p>	<p>Coffee Service – Exhibit Area</p>
<p>8:45 am – 9:45 N</p>	<p>Breakfast – Room: Arbor E, F, G</p>
<p>9:00 am – 12:00 N</p>	<p>2024 CEQA Update – (Credits: AICP 3.0, MCLE 3.0) Room: Arbor E, F, G – (Sponsor: Best Best & Kreiger LLP)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Halligan, Esq., Senior Director/Senior Environmental Counsel, Harris & Associates • Amanda Daams, Of Counsel, Best Best & Kreiger • Mark Teague, Managing Principal, Environmental, PlaceWorks
<p>10:30 am – 12:00 N</p>	<p>Exhibitor Teardown</p>



Conference Abstracts



Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Surprise! There's Contamination: Don't Let Hazards Surprise You

Sunday, March 24, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Audrey Herschberger, PE, Oregon, Project Engineer, Dudek

Panelist: Stephen Stoewer, Property Development Manager, City of Anaheim

Abstract:

There's nothing worse than being in the middle of the CEQA or permitting process and getting surprised by contamination. Whether found during the CEQA evaluation or during construction, a contaminated site can stall or even stop a project for good. On the other hand, perhaps you know there's a history of contamination, and the site may even have regulatory closure, but what may not be evident is that the existing conditions could still cause unexpected delays in the project. This session will discuss preliminary hazards screening and how much should be done before the CEQA and permitting processes even begin. Some topics we'll discuss include: Is contamination present at the site? Can it be mitigated? Why didn't the Phase I ESA identify it? Does a Phase I ESA need to be done now? What additional permits or permissions are needed? Is additional investigation required? Do I need regulatory agency oversight, closure, or permit approval? All these questions will be discussed in addition to one of the more common and problematic hazards, contaminated soil vapor, and the evolving regulatory screening levels and requirements. The goal of this session is to give you knowledge and confidence to apply toward your next project. You'll know when to review for hazards, how to review for hazards (or who to ask), how to respond to what you find, and how best to write and implement mitigation measures to move your project forward. Be prepared- don't let hazards surprise you.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Planning for the Future: The Intersection of Water Supply, RHNA, and Regional Stormwater Capture and Reuse Projects

Sunday, March 24, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Danielle O. Adili, Stormwater Resources Specialist, Fuscoe Engineering Inc.

Panelist: Cameron Castillo, Municipal Stormwater Specialist, Fuscoe Engineering Inc.

Abstract:

With a constantly changing climate and efforts to address regional housing needs, the sustainability of Southern California's key natural spaces and cityscapes will rely on the proactive management of water supply and resources. Historically, Southern California has heavily relied on regional groundwater basins and imported or recycled water distributed by local and regional water suppliers, with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California serving as a primary distributor. To ensure the sustainability of these resources, the state of California requires Urban Water Management Plans (UWMPs) for water suppliers to track and address supply, demand, drought contingencies, and climate impacts. Although there are state standards for UWMPs, wide variability among demand projections from different jurisdictions raises questions about the accuracy of long-term water supply planning. What differences exist between retail water providers and wholesale water providers? How are UWMPs addressing regional housing needs assessments (RHNA) regarding future water demand and supply projections? What additional water resources may be available to support RNHA housing needs? Our presentation will illustrate the complexities and connections between water planning, housing development requirements, and regional stormwater management. We will demonstrate the process of managing water supply in Southern California through the lens of UWMPs, highlighting the substantial variability across jurisdictions. Using the same approach, we will assess the incorporation of RHNA into UWMPs and its absence when projecting future water usage. Finally, we will summarize the regional projects currently underway through the Safe Clean Water Program (Measure W) in Los Angeles County aimed at capturing, reusing, or infiltrating stormwater into groundwater and demonstrate how these projects can support future RHNA units that may or may not be considered in the water supply process. The presentation will also offer suggestions on improving the regional water supply-demand side of things for better projections in the future.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Diversifying the Environmental and Planning Industry through Internship Programs- Milestones and Lessons Learned

Sunday, March 24, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Carey Fernandes, Practice Director, CEQA/NEPA, Dudek

Panelist: Mark Teague, Managing Principal, Environmental Services, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Taylor Morgan, Diversity and Recruiting Professional, Ascent Environmental

Panelist: Jessica Fernandez de la O, Student, San Diego State University

Abstract:

The environmental and planning fields have long lacked the diversity reflective of the communities in which we work. However, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in our workplace have become important core values em-

braced by many organizations in the industry, including AEP. In an effort to effect change, five leading California firms (Ascent, Dudek, ESA, PlaceWorks, and Rincon) founded the Environmental and Planning Diversity Internship Program. This grassroots program is a collaborative effort designed to create opportunities for college students and early career candidates from underrepresented communities so that they can engage with professionals in the private and public sectors and gain valuable work experience. The program recently completed its second year. Highlights included providing internships for 10 individuals and participating in a 2-week charrette where interns developed plans for community gardens in food desert areas within the community of Huntington Park. Even with the hurdles that accompany projects from inception, the positive impacts of the Environmental and Planning Diversity Internship Program have proven it to be a worthwhile and meaningful effort. This presentation will focus on the program's conception and implementation, concentrating on its importance, the framework, milestones reached, lessons learned, and tools/training required for replicating this type of program. The panel consists of individuals who have been integral to the program's development, and they will host a robust Q&A session following the presentation. This session will provide actionable takeaways and hopefully inspire other firms and organizations to create similar programs so that California can continue to encourage DEI in the environmental and planning fields.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

Air Quality and Climate Change Workshop

Sunday, March 24, 2024

1:30 pm – 4:45 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Michael Hendrix, Principal, Michael Hendrix Consulting

Panelist: Michael Krause, Planning & Rules Manager, South Coast Air Quality Management District

Panelist: Sam Wang, Program Supervisor, CEQA IGR, South Coast Air Quality Management District

Panelist: Nicole Vermillion, Principal, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Jennifer Reed, Air Quality Manager, Dudek

Panelist: Rich Walter, Principal, Climate Action & Resiliency Services, ICF

Panelist: Poonam Boparai, Principal, Air Quality and Climate Change, Ascent Environmental

Abstract:

The 2024 Conference Air Quality and Climate Change Workshop is a half-day (4-hour) workshop packed with the latest methods and thresholds related to CEQA/NEPA analysis of air quality, GHG emissions, and climate change. The workshop will include South Coast Air Quality Management District staff providing an overview of the proposed cumulative air toxics thresholds that takes into account environmental justice communities. The brief summary of the thresholds will be followed by an interactive problem-solving project example designed to engage the audience and solicit questions. Having trouble with the new cloud-based CalEEMod program? The workshop will include an overview of how to use the climate risk and environmental justice modules of the program followed by an interactive dive into an example project where the audience provides the inputs and we see how the model works. We will also provide an overview of signed legislation and published court cases that were due to come out in October through December 2023, with audience discussion of how the latest legislation and case law affects CEQA analysis of projects, Climate Action Plans, and General Plans. In addition, the workshop will include a deeper dive into how the State goal of net Carbon Neutrality works, and how that will impact GHG thresholds. This last topic is a continuation of the discussion from last year's conference and will include lessons learned. The AEP Climate Change Committee will provide new information on reducing GHG emissions using electric vehicles vs

reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), why we need both, and how to accomplish both. Finally, the workshop will provide some sobering climate modeling that predicts drastic changes in natural habitats, and how CEQA mitigation of habitat conservation needs to take the predicted changes into account. All of the topics are designed to be interactive.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Environmental Planning 101: Soft Skills for Planners

Sunday, March 24, 2024

3:15 pm – 4:45 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ryan Bensley, AICP, Principal, LSA Associates, Inc.

Panelist: Olivia Mattair, Assistant Environmental Planner, LSA

Panelist: Lauren Peachey, Assistant Environmental Planner, LSA

Panelist: Ali Pezeshkpour, AICP, Planning Manager, City of Santa Ana

Panelist: Konnie Dobрева, Vice President of Environmental Planning, EPD Solutions

Abstract:

This panel invites guests back into the classroom for an interactive session to gain a new perspective on environmental planning as we discuss the “soft skills” that could elevate your planning expertise and build your career. You may have studied the difference between CEQA and NEPA, but did you learn the importance of building your personal brand? Sure, you can recite the Appendix G environmental topics from memory, but have you mastered the art of networking? As much as this industry involves managing projects, managing people plays an equally important role. Being proactive, solution-oriented, and understanding your organization’s expectations and limitations are just a few examples of soft skills that are vital to our success as planners and environmental professionals – yet they aren’t always covered in college courses. To put it simply, people like to work with people they like. Effective interpersonal and communication skills can make a difference in efficiency, acquisition of new projects, and more. No matter where you are in your planning career, incorporating soft skills could be the secret to elevating your work. These lessons are often learned through modeling behavior after superiors or unwittingly committing an office faux pas. But what if you could take a crash course in these unspoken “rules”? This diverse panel showcases unique perspectives from opposite ends of the planning spectrum; public sector to private sector, entry-level to principal, and everything in between, and offers opportunities for audience engagement. Each story will highlight a different soft skill pertaining to establishing your brand, owning your work, building your network, and becoming a leader and how you can (and should!) incorporate these skills into your everyday practices to enhance your career.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Make Some Noise about Noise Analysis

Sunday, March 24, 2024

3:15 pm – 4:45 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Stephanie Standerfer, Albert A. Webb Associates

Panelist: Bill Maddux, Urban Crossroads

Panelist: Amanda Daams, Of Counsel, Best Best & Krieger, LLP

Panelist: Cheryl DeGano, Albert A. Webb Associates

Abstract:

The days of noise analysis quietly slipping under the sonar (pun intended), are over. Potential project-generated noise has become a popular target for parties in opposition to a project. The panelists for this moderator led session include a noise analyst, seasoned CEQA practitioner, and seasoned CEQA Attorney. Our session will include a brief introduction to noise basics and the vocabulary of noise before our panelists dive into what is needed for a thorough and complete noise analysis. Using real-world examples, this presentation will include a discussion of how, when, and where to conduct ambient noise measurements; methodologies to predict post-project noise levels for stationary and mobile sources; identification of appropriate significance thresholds; and development of effective mitigation measures. We will also cover responding to comments when “experts” disagree and offer tips for explaining this technical topic to lead agency decision makers. Bring your noise stories, both the fairy tales and horror stories, and join us in making some noise about noise.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Rage Against the (Internal Combustion) Machine: Role of Public Agency in Supporting and Deploying Zero Emissions Vehicle

Sunday, March 24, 2024

3:15 pm – 4:45 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Kelly Bray, LEED, Principal Sustainability Planner, Harris & Associates

Panelist: Tyler Farmer, Chief, Sustainability Planning Division, County of San Diego

Panelist: Moe Zarabi, LEED AP-ND, Senior Land Use/Environmental Planner, County of San Diego

Panelist: Ricky Williams, AICP, Land Use/Environmental Planner- Sustainability, County of San Diego

Abstract:

The County of San Diego and regional partners are actively building frameworks for regional and local zero-emission vehicle (e.g., electric vehicles [EV], hydrogen vehicles) infrastructure deployment in anticipation for future demand and to reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs). The County of San Diego’s EV Roadmap identifies strategies to build EV charging infrastructure and support EV adoption in the community. Key challenges include ensuring equitable access to clean vehicles and technology across the community and building adequate public charging infrastructure to support future growth in zero-emission vehicles. The EV Roadmap has created programs that increase EV education and awareness, installed EV chargers in the unincorporated area, and streamlined EV infrastructure permitting. The County also prepared an EV infrastructure planning analysis, which is a spatial analysis to help understand where low-income people and renters have difficult access to EV markets and chargers. The County focused efforts on Environmental Justice communities to target increased ownership. This is also a regional approach. The Accelerate to Zero (A2Z) Emissions Collaboration brings together key regional agencies to build strategies to increase zero-emission vehicle infrastructure across the region. This collaboration resulted in the creation of a regional gap analysis, identifying barriers to EV adoption and infrastructure installation and steps towards a Regional Strategy. Agencies like Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee (local non-profit that operates affordable housing and EV programs for low-income people) are working directly with low- to moderate-income residents to provide incentives and rebates to lower the purchase price of EVs, increasing accessibility to these vehicles and technologies. This presentation identifies challenges faced and suggestions for creating similar programs locally or regionally, and how to leverage funding opportunities to support these goals.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Paving a Strategic Path Forward to Advance the Environmental Profession

Sunday, March 24, 2024

3:15 pm – 4:45 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Vanessa Toscano, Principal Planner, HELIX Environmental Planning

Panelist: Elena Nuño, Air Resources Specialist, Dudek

Panelist: Claudia Garcia, Principal Planner, City of Berkeley

Panelist: Mindy Fogg, Planning Manager, County of Ventura

Panelist: La Mikia Castillo, Principal, Castillo Consulting Partners

Panelist: Marie Campbell, Principal and CEO, Sapphos Environmental, Inc.

Abstract:

As the California AEP continues on its journey to make environmental professions accessible to more people, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee and state and local chapter leadership are embarking on a strategic planning process to advance the organization's DEI goals through intentional, impactful, and sustainable actions. Led by the AEP DEI Committee, this session will explore strategic initiatives to foster inclusivity and belonging, promote and embrace diversity, and ensure equity in all aspects of the organization's operations. The panel will provide an update on the ongoing work of AEP to implement the DEI Initiative that has been underway since 2020 and engage attendees in the process of developing a DEI Strategic Plan. This interactive discussion will build upon the recommendations that have been identified based on the information and feedback received from the membership survey and 2023 State Conference session by soliciting input from attendees in developing and prioritizing key components of the plan. Ultimately, the DEI Strategic Plan will be incorporated into the overall goals and yearly planning initiatives of AEP as part of leadership's commitment to supporting DEI as a foundational requirement of the environmental profession. The DEI Committee invites, welcomes, and values the experience and input of each member of the community of environmental professionals joining this session.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Plan It Right: Deciphering the VMT Riddle in Tomorrow's General Plans

Monday, March 25, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ronald T. Milam, AICP, PTP, Director of Evolving the Status Quo, Fehr & Peers

Panelist: Mark Teague, AICP, Managing Principal, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Tom Grahn, Senior Planner, City of Ontario

Abstract:

General plan updates create a unique opportunity to address VMT reduction expectations for cities and counties, establish impact thresholds tied to community values, and provide tiering for subsequent projects. This session will provide case studies from urban, suburban, and rural jurisdictions that are role models others can follow. These case studies answer questions like: - Does the lead agency have discretion to set their own VMT impact thresholds?- What substantial evidence is needed to support a threshold decision?- What role do the CEQA Guidelines and OPR Technical Advisory play?- How important is it to consider the AB 32 Scoping Plan when setting

a threshold?- How have recent disruptive trends in transportation affected VMT estimates and forecasts? Case studies to include the Sacramento General Plan MEIR, City of Roseville General Plan EIR, City of Oroville Land Use Element Update EIR, and City of Ontario General Plan EIR.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Thanks for the Input: Best Practices for the Peer Review Process

Monday, March 25, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ryan Bensley, LSA Associates, Inc.

Panelist: Hayden Beckman, Senior Planner, City of Huntington Beach

Panelist: JT Stephens, Principal Noise and Vibration Specialist, LSA

Panelist: Konnie Dobрева, Vice President of Environmental Planning, EPD Solutions

Abstract:

As environmental planners, we understand that the primary goal of the environmental review process is to produce a legally defensible document that accurately evaluates a project's potential impacts on the surrounding environment. In order to achieve this goal, we are often called upon to review the technical work of others or to have our own documents reviewed by qualified experts in the field. Throughout this peer review process, project managers must efficiently coordinate multiple rounds of review, submittals, and comments. So, how do you stay organized and ensure that deliverables are prepared on schedule and within budget? This panel will focus on sharing best practices for the peer review of supporting technical work that you can incorporate into your next project! Learn how to set clear expectations, avoid pitfalls and schedule delays, clear up confusion early on in the peer review process, and establish consistency between all supporting technical work. Understand the importance of maintaining ongoing, meaningful communication between parties and treating all those involved with the respect that their expertise deserves. Join a city planner and professionals from several consulting firms with extensive experience with the peer review process for a discussion of how to keep things on track when important questions and concerns are raised by reviewers.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Navigating California's Affordable Housing Maze: From Laws to Lumber

Monday, March 25, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Travis Randel, Deputy City Manager, Development Services, City of San Jacinto

Panelist: Amanda Tropiano, Principal, De Novo Planning Group

Panelist: Amanda Daams, Of Council, Best Best & Kreiger

Panelist: Shonda Herold, Senior Project Manager, Affirmed Housing

Abstract:

Join us for an engaging session that explores the intricate world of housing element law, affordable housing, and the unique challenges faced by local jurisdictions in California. In this thought-provoking session, we will delve into three key aspects:

1. Unlocking the Housing Element Law. Dive into the legal framework of California's housing element law and discover why accounting for housing is crucial for sustainable development. Learn how it shapes our communities and impacts environmental planning.
2. Balancing Act: Affordable Housing and Politics. Explore the delicate dance that local jurisdictions perform when striving to provide affordable housing options. We'll discuss the intricate interplay between political considerations and the pursuit of environmentally responsible housing solutions.
3. From Blueprint to Reality: Funding Affordable Housing. Delve into the financial intricacies of affordable housing projects. We'll examine the hurdles faced by professionals seeking to secure funding and navigate the complexities of building sustainable and affordable housing.

Step into the world of environmental innovation with our distinguished panel of experts, featuring seasoned environmental professionals, consultants, developers, and bureaucrats. Drawing from their wealth of experience, our panel has navigated this journey multiple times and is ready to be your compass through the twists and turns of the environmental landscape. Get ready for dynamic discussions, real-world projects, and unexpected insights that will keep you engaged throughout! Designed for passionate environmental professionals and housing advocates alike, this session focuses on the intersection of housing, policy, and sustainability. Join us for an invigorating conversation that will unveil the dynamic changes in the housing landscape of the Golden State. Come prepared to share and explore ideas, gain valuable insights, and collaboratively craft innovative strategies for a greener, more inclusive future.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Climate Action Planning with Federal Funding Support

Monday, March 25, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Amy Fischer, President, LSA

Panelist: Jessica Coria, Director of Air Quality & Climate Change Services, LSA

Panelist: Alison Imamura, Principal Engineer, Monterey One Water

Panelist: Meredith Canterbury, Senior GIS Specialist, LSA

Abstract:

Climate Action Planning with Federal Funding Support: The US EPA CPRG Program in Action in Fresno County. The US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) Program represents a significant source of funding to support climate action and adaptation projects nationwide. This session will provide an overview of the program's Planning Grants, including the CPRG Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP), Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP), and implementation grant funding process. The County of Fresno, supported by the Fresno Council of Governments (COG), was one of 67 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) selected nationwide to receive federal funding to support climate action planning under the CPRG Program. A case-study of the County of Fresno PCAP, as prepared by the Fresno COG with consulting support from LSA will be presented, including an overview of the greenhouse gas emissions inventory, the outreach and public engagement process, priority measures selected for inclusion in the PCAP, the benefit analysis conducted for low-income and disadvantaged communities in the area, and next steps for the preparation of the CCAP for the County.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

Hydrogen as a Transportation Fuel: How Will this Technology Impact AQ and GHG Analyses in CEQA Project Case Studies?

Monday, March 25, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Darrin Trageser, Air Quality and Climate Change Specialist, ICF

Panelist: Rich Walter, Vice President, Environmental Planning, ICF

Panelist: Pierre Glaize, Air Quality & Climate Change Specialist, ICF

Abstract:

As hydrogen has recently emerged as a viable transportation fuel, current CEQA documents have analyzed the air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions benefits of hydrogen compared to other fuels and technologies. However, the emissions benefits from using hydrogen fuel cells can vary greatly by project due to two factors: 1) hydrogen production and 2) transportation and distribution. AB 8 (2013) requires the deployment of sufficient hydrogen fueling infrastructure and the California Air Resources Board has programs and regulations in place to encourage hydrogen fuel use. A color-coded scheme is used to illustrate the various production methods of hydrogen and their respective GHG footprints, ranging from Green Hydrogen (little to no carbon footprint) to Black Hydrogen (large carbon footprint). Currently, 95% of the hydrogen produced in the United States is made by natural gas (methane) reforming, otherwise known as Grey Hydrogen, which has a medium GHG footprint if no carbon dioxide is captured. Due to the sparse distribution of existing large central hydrogen production plants in California and the western United States, Grey Hydrogen delivery to a project site, which normally involves the use of tanker trucks, would reduce the air pollutant emissions benefits of a project in a well-to-wheel analysis. However, if Green Hydrogen can be produced on-site for a project, total well-to-wheel air pollutant emissions would be minimal, if not zero. For the SBCTA Arrow Maintenance Facility Hydrogen Fuel Upgrade Project (San Bernardino County Transportation Authority 2023), the SBCTA is planning to deploy the first in North America battery- and hydrogen-powered passenger train. In addition to the project mentioned above, additional CEQA project case studies that include an analysis of hydrogen as a transportation fuel will be discussed during the presentation.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Navigating the Twists and Turns: Environmental Review for Transportation Projects

Monday, March 25, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Alan Ashimine, Michael Baker International

Panelist: Melissa Dugan, AICP, Supervising Transportation Planner, City of Irvine

Panelist: Gabriela Duran, Associate Environmental Planner, Caltrans

Panelist: Jessica Ditto, Senior Project Manager, Michael Baker International

Abstract:

From regional freeway widenings to local intersection improvements, transportation facilities carry their own unique array of challenges and environmental constraints. As linear projects, these improvements can often traverse a wide range of jurisdictions, land uses, populations, and environmental circumstances that set them apart from other types of projects. Environmental documentation for transportation infrastructure requires a diligent review under CEQA, while the frequent use of federal funds as a nexus for NEPA creates additional complexities to navigate. This session will take a deep dive into best practices for environmental review for transportation

projects, providing unique insights from the state, local agency, and consultant perspectives. The panel will discuss processing environmental approvals for projects on the State Highway System under the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference (SER), in addition to local agency projects requiring both CEQA and NEPA documentation. Case studies and lessons learned will be provided by transportation and environmental practitioners who work with the full spectrum of transportation facilities on a daily basis.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Green Tape Gets a Snip: CEQA Compliance for Restoration Projects

Monday, March 25, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: May Lau, Southern California Permitting Program Manager, ESA

Panelist: Jill Sunahara, Northern California Biological Resources Director, ESA

Panelist: Meredith Parkin, Vice President, ESA

Panelist: Erika Lovejoy, Director, Accelerating Restoration, Sustainable Conservation

Abstract:

When environmental compliance and permit requirements can impede the progress of restoration projects that benefit the environment (e.g., ecological restoration), it becomes “green tape.” To propel meaningful changes to the permitting process, the State of California’s “Cutting Green Tape Initiative” was backed by the Administration of Governor Gavin Newsom in 2019 and made a top priority in an Executive Order in 2020. In support of the Cutting Green Tape: Regulatory Efficiencies for a Resilient Environment Report (2020), the State Water Resources Control Board developed and approved the Statewide Restoration General Order (SRGO) and Program EIR in 2022 to effectively streamline the regulatory approval process to accelerate restoration projects in California. Project proponents can use categorical and statutory CEQA exemptions for habitat restoration projects, as well as the SRGO and Program EIR (e.g., through an addendum, supplemental EIR, etc.) to help streamline the permitting and CEQA compliance process for their restoration projects. In addition, the SRGO and Program EIR are consistent with other restoration authorizations, including Biological Opinions developed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service. The Program EIR was innovative in addressing a multitude of restoration projects statewide. ESA was involved in the development of the Program EIR, SRGO, and Programmatic Biological Opinions. This panel includes several of the key staff leading those efforts. The panel will discuss the applicability of the CEQA exemptions, as well as practical ways to use the Program EIR for restoration projects, including those with multiple benefits, such as groundwater recharge, recreation, flood management, water quality improvement, and/or adaptation to climate change.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Ready! Set! Go!: Determining Evacuation Impacts

Monday, March 25, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Lisa Maier, Urban Forester/ Fire Protection Analyst, Dudek

Panelist: Michael Huff, Urban Forestry/Fire Protection Planning Practice, Dudek

Panelist: Andee Leisy, Senior Partner, Senior Partner, Remy Moose and Manley LLP

Panelist: Phuong Nguyen, PE, Senior Transportation Engineer, CR Associates

Abstract:

Study of evacuation timeframes and potential increases in evacuation time with a proposed project are relatively new CEQA focus areas. Public safety, not time, is generally the guiding consideration for evaluating impacts related to emergency evacuation. CEQA Guidelines Appendix G defines a Project's impact on evacuation as significant if the Project will significantly impair or physically interfere with implementation of an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. However, the "Best Practices for Analyzing and Mitigating Wildfire Impacts of Development Projects Under the California Environmental Quality Act" guidance from the California Office of the Attorney General suggests that jurisdictions set benchmarks of significance based on past successful evacuations or on those from communities in similar situations. There are no established thresholds for evacuation times for any California community currently, this is primarily because every location and fire scenario are unique. While it may take one community 20 minutes to evacuate safely, it is not a valid assumption to consider a 3-hour evacuation for another community as unsafe. The 3-hour evacuation can be very safe while the 20-minute evacuation may be unsafe due to the conditions and exposures along the evacuation routes. Timeframes for moving people vary by site specifics, population, road capacities and other factors and there is no one threshold that would be appropriate to all locations. Join us for an overview of evacuation planning in California and current approaches to evacuation planning.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Imperial County's Renewable Future: Transforming the Valley from Agriculture to a Green Economy

Monday, March 25, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Brian Mooney, FAICP, Senior Principal, RICK Engineering Company

Panelist: Carey Fernandes, AICP, CEQA Practice Lead, Dudek

Panelist: Shannon Baer, Senior Planner, RICK Engineering Company

Panelist: Jim Minnick, Director of the Planning and Development Services, County of Imperial

Abstract:

California's valleys were once the promise lands for supplying the nation's crops and food supply. Now, with climate change and higher demands on water, California's valleys are less fruitful for agriculture due to dwindling water supplies and are trending to be more beneficial for renewable energies that thrive in this climate. California's valleys have been grappling with how to manage the shift from agriculture to renewables for over a decade. Panelists from Imperial County and their planning and environmental consultant team will discuss the obstacles and mechanisms used to carefully navigate agriculture conversions to renewable energy (and in this case, renewable energy with lithium extraction). What are the economic and natural resource implications of converting agriculture and how have agencies responding to the challenges of local farmer concerns, water rights, and environmental justice issues? This session will uncover the less traditional renewable opportunities of California's valleys, such as geothermal, algae, and biomass, as well as their fruitful byproducts, i.e., lithium, biofuels, and green hydrogen. Imperial County is undergoing a renewable resources-focused Lithium Valley Specific Plan, Programmatic Environmental Impact Report, and public and environmental justice outreach program, for over 50,000 acres of agricultural land adjacent to the Salton Sea. This project will expedite renewable energy development and spark new investment in traditionally underserved areas. Find out how Imperial County is planning for this paradigm shift in the economy and the skilled workforce and population growth that comes along with it. What can be learned from large-scale renewable energy projects and what sets Imperial County up for success?

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

Miles Ahead: Advancing VMT Impact Analysis for Better Outcomes (A Conversation with ARB and Caltrans)

Monday, March 25, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ronald T. Milam, AICP, PTP, Director of Evolving the Status Quo, Fehr & Peers

Panelist: Eric Sundquist, Acting Deputy Director, Sustainability, Caltrans

Panelist: Jennifer Gress, Division Chief, Sustainable Transportation, California Air Resources Board

Panelist: Chris Ganson, California Air Resources Board

Abstract:

This session is a moderated conversation with an expert panel focused on how to advance vehicle miles traveled (VMT) impact analysis for transportation projects to create better outcomes, including air quality, greenhouse gases (GHGs), energy consumption, safety, public health, and land consumption. The panel includes senior leaders representing the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and Caltrans plus an expert consultant that has developed and applied a wide variety of state and local guidance. Part of the foundation for this session is technical information and guidance from the CARB and Caltrans that considers avoiding or minimizing VMT increases. The panel will provide an overview of the current state of the practice expectations and how to advance those expectations for better outcomes. The initial overview presentation will be followed by a moderated question and answer session with the audience to help facilitate a shared understanding of the challenges with current practices and what may be barriers or constraints to creating better outcomes.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

CEQA Law and Ethics

Monday, March 25, 2024

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP Law: 1.5, AICP Ethics: 1.5

Panelist: William Halligan, ESQ, Harris and Associates

Panelist: Alisha Winterswyk, Best Best and Kreiger

Abstract:

Environmental planning practices are dependent on local legislation and regulatory processes, which change frequently. This session will ensure that environmental professionals have a current understanding of case law, regulations and statutes and their impact on the environmental process. In addition, environmental professionals pledge to uphold high standards of ethics and professional conduct. This session will ensure that environmental professionals maintain an understanding of how a Code of Ethics applies to evolving circumstances and trends in the practice of environmental planning.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Say What? How to Effectively Respond to Public Comments

Monday, March 25, 2024

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Tracy Zinn, AICP, President, T&B Planning, Inc.

Panelist: Alan Fenstermacher, Partner, Land Use and Entitlements, Rutan & Tucker, LLP

Panelist: Nicole Morse, Principal, T&B Planning, Inc.

Panelist: Christopher Koontz, AICP, Director of Development Services, City of Long Beach

Abstract:

Responding to public comments during the CEQA compliance process has become more complex, interesting, and occasionally amusing in recent years. In working through various issues that reflect public interests, CEQA professionals are often faced with deciding how to best address public comments in various formats. This panel explores best practices in responding to public comments through the lenses of a public agency, a CEQA practitioner, and a CEQA compliance attorney. The session will review the mandatory requirements of public noticing and preparing responses. Tips will be presented on how to address public comments on NOPs, MNDs, and EIRs, and at scoping meetings and in public hearings. The panel will use examples from recent public records and hearings and discuss what worked and didn't work, and how responses are looked upon during CEQA litigation. Don't hold back asking questions in this session—our panelists will be ready to help attendees navigate through the twists and turns of professionally and effectively responding to all types of CEQA-related public communications.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Carbon Neutral Communities

Monday, March 25, 2024

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Shannon Hatcher, California Air Resources Board

Panelist: Caitlin Greenway, Staff Air Pollution Specialist, California Air Resources Board

Panelist: Matthew McFalls, Ascent

Panelist: Austin Kerr, Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Analyst, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

Abstract:

In December 2022, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the third update to the Scoping Plan for Achieving Carbon Neutrality (Scoping Plan Update), as mandated by Assembly Bill (AB) 32. In addition, CARB released the Draft 2022 Progress Report (SB 150 Report), mandated by Senate Bill (SB) 150 to assess implementation of California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375), in June 2022.

The Scoping Plan Update identifies regional and local climate actions to provide a range of affordable housing and transportation options, and efficient access to a variety of jobs and services as critical to achieving the State's air quality and climate goals. At the same time, statewide data from the SB 150 Report shows Californians continue to have limited options and accessibility, with driving increasing at a historic rate.

Immediate and transformational changes to the way we plan, fund, and build communities are needed to support achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. Many State, regional, and local partners wish to take meaningful climate

action in alignment with State goals to address the climate crisis. However, many agencies are often uncertain which actions are most meaningful and how they can best participate in these efforts.

CARB, the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research (OPR) (pending), and a CEQA consultant are proposing a panel presentation and Q&A session on the role of State, regional, and local agency planning and CEQA implementation in meeting State climate goals and advancing equitable outcomes.

Session presentations will describe implementation actions that the State, regions, and local jurisdictions can take to advance and support the State’s climate and equity goals consistent with the Scoping Plan’s and SB 150 Report’s recommendations for community-scale actions. Presentations will highlight various efforts underway by State and regional agencies. The session will also include guidance to local jurisdictions for preparing climate action plans (CAP), including considerations for aligning local greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions targets with State climate goals and the three priority areas where local climate action has the greatest GHG reduction potential: 1) building decarbonization, 2) transportation electrification, and 3) reductions in regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT). It will also provide guidance related to CEQA, describing how to evaluate and mitigate residential and mixed-use development projects consistent with the Scoping Plan, including a qualitative approach based on key attributes that facilitate reductions of GHG emissions and regional VMT.

The session will also present considerations for analyzing GHG impacts under CEQA, CEQA thresholds of significance for GHG emissions, and mitigating GHG emissions. Finally, the session will also discuss achieving regional SB 375 GHG reduction targets through planning and building more sustainable and equitable communities. This includes how regional and local communities can move away from a cars-first model while building communities and infrastructure that enable a wider range of access and mobility choices.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Breaking Down Silos: Implementing Climate Action Plans through a Whole of Government Approach

Monday, March 25, 2024

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Andrew Martin, Ascent

Panelist: Shelby Rust Busó, Chief Sustainability Officer, City of San Diego

Panelist: Scott Anders, Director, Energy Policy Initiatives Center (EPIC) at USD School of Law

Abstract:

Building on over a decade of climate leadership- including its 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP) to achieve net zero emissions by 2035- the City of San Diego is now showing how to overcome what is arguably the most important contemporary challenge facing environmental professionals working in local government: implementing and achieving the ambitious targets and actions set forth in CAPs. This presentation will cover the Climate Action Implementation Plan and companion tools the City has developed to overcome this challenge through a ‘whole of government approach’ that centers accountability and transparency and integrates CAP implementation into the very fiber of the City’s governance structure. The Implementation Plan includes cost estimates to align the City’s future budgeting decisions with the CAP and lays out the tasks and responsibilities to be carried forward by departments and reported on through annual workplans. The Implementation Plan clearly defines each City department’s CAP implementation responsibilities every fiscal year and integrates equity into CAP-related projects

and initiatives. It also sets forth the ‘measures of success’ used to evaluate progress toward the CAP’s quantified performance targets. While planning, and certainly climate action planning, has been traditionally siloed at public agencies, this Implementation Plan provides the framework for a truly collaborative approach to reducing emissions while paying specific attention to Communities of Concern, budgetary needs, and measures of success. The panelists will utilize Slido, a live polling and Q&A platform to facilitate audience engagement and communication. Beyond answering questions, the panelists will engage attendees in discussion about applying San Diego’s lessons learned within their unique governmental and community contexts. By attending this session, you will leave not only with knowledge of this City of San Diego case study but equipped with the tools to break down silos and achieve meaningful CAP implementation in your own community.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

Conserving Land, Conserving Miles: Land Conservation as a VMT Mitigation Strategy

Monday, March 25, 2024

1:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Chelsea Richer, AICP, Principal, Fehr & Peers

Panelist: Aaron Gabbe, PhD, Regional Conservation Director, RCA/Riverside County Transportation Commission

Panelist: Elizabeth O’Donoghue, Director, Sustainable & Resilient Communities, The Nature Conservancy

Panelist: Cara Lacey, AICP, Associate Program Director, Climate, The Nature Conservancy

Panelist: Jeremiah LaRose, Associate, Fehr & Peers

Abstract:

How much VMT could be reduced by moving developable land—already accounted for in future growth scenario’s VMT outcomes—onto a conservation pathway, encouraging the same development to occur in more VMT-efficient locations? Who might administer such a mitigation? Could enough revenue from the sale of these VMT credits be generated to buy and conserve target parcels? Come hear from a panel exploring this emerging VMT mitigation topic. Using established methods and tools such as Western Riverside Council of Government’s travel demand model (RIVCOM), the Riverside Conservation Authority/Riverside County Transportation Commission, Fehr & Peers, and The Nature Conservancy have evaluated a sample of parcels in high VMT areas identified as targets for conservation. Land conservation as a VMT mitigation strategy offers the potential to generate benefits across multiple resource areas and redirect growth from high to low VMT areas, directly in line with the broader goals of SB 743 to encourage more compact development patterns and discourage sprawl. Furthermore, land conservation can have an amplified effect on carbon reduction compared to other VMT mitigation strategies; not only are tailpipe emissions avoided, but so too are lifecycle emissions. Additional benefits include sequestering carbon and protecting wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wildlife corridors. Establishing administrative mechanisms to enable mitigation—like VMT Banks and Exchanges—will only work if there are enough viable mitigation measures to begin with. While most agencies are compliant with SB 743, having established VMT thresholds, many struggle to find options to mitigate VMT impacts. This study can establish the groundwork for land conservation as a VMT mitigation measure across the state—anywhere target conservation parcels overlap with high VMT areas.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Understanding the Complex Evolution and Practice of AB 52: Tribal Consultation and Cooperative Mitigation Strategies

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:45 pm – 5:15 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Heather McDaniel McDevitt, Senior Archaeologist, Dudek

Panelist: TBD TBD, Barbareño/Ventureño Band of Mission Indians Representative

Panelist: Rachel Struglia, CEQA Principal, Dudek

Panelist: TBD TBD, County of Los Angeles Representative

Abstract:

AB 52 established a new relationship between California public agencies and Native American tribes, defining a new class of resources and impacts under CEQA. It has been over 8 years since AB 52 was signed into law, and implementation of the bill has proven more complex each year as the practice of tribal consultation becomes more dynamic and challenging. The implementation process of AB 52 can be rigorous, especially considering the different goals, pressures, and considerations of lead agencies, Native American tribes, cultural resources experts, and CEQA practitioners. The goal of this panel is to provide a better understanding of the AB 52 process and its execution so that a greater appreciation for diverse perspectives can be reached and a good practical understanding of the bill can be continually improved. This panel will consider how AB 52 and the coordination between lead agencies, tribes, and CEQA practitioners has developed from each participant's perspective. In retrospect, is AB 52 being practiced in the manner each panelist envisioned at its inception? What are the pitfalls of current approaches to AB 52? How can AB 52 be implemented differently or more effectively? How do both entities in the "government to government" process adequately ensure that the spirit of the bill is retained and exercised properly? What best practices have emerged? Drawing on factual case studies primarily in southern California, a central theme of this panel will be to discuss how AB 52 can be implemented with an emphasis on cooperation, integration of multiple viewpoints, and mutually beneficial management strategies.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Groundwater in the Face of CEQA, Case Law, and Sustainability

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:45 pm – 5:15 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Kim Clyma, JD, Senior Environmental Planner/Project Manager, Woodard & Curran

Panelist: Haley Johnson, Water Resource Planner, Woodard & Curran

Panelist: Natalie Cochran, Water Resource Planner, Woodard & Curran

Panelist: Jennifer Ziv, Project Manager, Woodard & Curran

Panelist: Casey Shorrock, Attorney, Somach Simmons & Dunn

Abstract:

Water supply, well construction permits, sustainability, oh my! Agencies are having to navigate the implementation and updating of Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) in light of recent court cases and Executive Orders. While GSPs themselves have been exempt from CEQA, are there instances where doing CEQA could prove beneficial? Until recently, issuance of well permits was considered a ministerial action exempt from CEQA. However,

changes in case law and regulations have changed the status quo. What is the line of demarcation? To what extent is CEQA review needed in the context of approved GSPs? With all these competing factors, practitioners and agencies alike can be left scratching their heads. With recent caselaw and drought executive orders, agencies are left to revise ordinances, update policies, and review well construction applications and cumulative water supply impacts. In this session, we will provide an update and insights on the current state of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA); some of the current challenges agencies are facing in GSP implementation, submitting GSP updates, and navigating Executive Order N-3-23; and then dive into case studies highlighting the intersection of SGMA and CEQA. We'll review case studies of several municipalities and agencies in California to examine how they are incorporating SGMA and CEQA into their groundwater project planning and decision-making.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Dissecting CEQA Streamlining and Subsequent Review: How to Understand It, Embrace It, and Make It Work for You

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:45 pm – 5:15 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Heidi Mekkelson, Managing Director, ICF

Panelist: Ryan Shum, Senior Planner, San Francisco Planning Department

Panelist: Chelsea Maclean, Partner, Holland & Knight LLP

Abstract:

The dictionary defines “streamlining” as “making simpler or more efficient.” However, in practice, CEQA streamlining can be anything but. Whether you are tiering off a 20-year-old program EIR or developing an innovative technique to implement a new legislative CEQA pathway, streamlining presents its own unique set of challenges. Similar challenges can arise when preparing a subsequent environmental review or addendum to a previously approved CEQA document. The bottom line? Using an old document or a vaguely worded and complex streamlining process to clear a new project can sometimes feel like fitting a square peg into a round hole. This panel will review the differences and similarities between streamlining and subsequent review, including specific pathways and requirements for each. We will focus on practice tips and common pitfalls (and how to avoid them). We will discuss what CEQA, the State CEQA Guidelines, and case law tell us about the scope of streamlined and subsequent review. The panel will conclude with a case study of the General Plan Evaluation (GPE) process that the City of San Francisco uses to streamline the review of residential projects by tiering off its Housing Element 2022 Update EIR, consistent with Public Resources Code Section 21083.3 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Coastal Resilience Master Planning: Protecting Southern California’s Coastline from the Effects of Sea Level Rise

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:45 pm – 5:15 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Darin Neufeld, AICP, Director, Harris & Associates

Panelist: Julia Chase, LEED, GA, Chief Resilience Officer, City of San Diego

Panelist: Brian Leslie, Senior Coastal Scientist / Project Manager, GHD

Panelist: Nick Sadrpour, Senior Coastal Scientist/Project Manager, GHD

Panelist: Diego Velasco, AICP, Principal and Founder, Citythinkers

Abstract:

Climate change increasingly puts our communities and critical built and natural resources at risk of coastal flooding and erosion due to sea level rise. To address these risks, the City of San Diego is developing a Coastal Resilience Master Plan, which will identify specific resilience and conservation needs along the coastline and develop a portfolio of nature-based solution projects to promote resilience, protect critical habitats, support coastal access, and mitigate risks associated with sea level rise. The Coastal Resilience Master Plan implements the City's adaptation plan, Climate Resilient SD, which prioritizes nature-based solutions to address climate change-related hazards. Nature-based solutions evaluated by the plan include both green and natural infrastructure. Green infrastructure encompasses a wide range of built or engineered solutions modeled after nature, while natural solutions often refer to restoration activities. Both green and natural infrastructure provide additional community-serving benefits, such as stormwater management, flood mitigation, and urban heat island reduction. The panel of experts will discuss the science and efficacy of nature-based solutions to adapt to the effects of flooding and sea level rise. Robust community engagement is a key pillar of the Coastal Resilience Master Plan, with a focus on inclusive engagement that prioritizes the voices of disadvantaged communities who are often the least equipped to adapt to climate change due to historic disinvestments. The panel will discuss approaches to community engagement, such as "pop-up events," that strive for more inclusive engagement and provide interactive opportunities for the public to help shape project design and while also increasing awareness of how climate change will affect their community. Come hear from the City's Chief Resilience Officer, Senior Coastal Scientists, and outreach and engagement experts on how to implement coastal resiliency planning to adapt to the effects of climate change and sea level rise.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

What is the Value of Reducing VMT? EVs, Changing GHG Emissions, and Other Benefit Considerations Over Time

Monday, March 25, 2024

3:45 pm – 5:15 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Rich Walter, Vice President, Environmental Planning, ICF

Abstract:

This session will explore the benefits of reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) now and in the future. A major part of the rationale for reducing VMT per SB 375 and SB 743 has been to support California greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals. Reducing VMT overall to date has proven elusive for the economy as a whole and is challenging for new roadway capacity projects and land use projects. At the same time, there is an acceleration of market penetration and an aggressive regulatory push for electric vehicles (EVs) in the light-, medium-, and heavy-duty vehicle sectors, which will reduce the GHG emission reduction benefits of reducing VMT. This session will present a range of scenarios for VMT reduction, EV adoption, and electrical grid decarbonization to estimate ranges of associated GHG emissions. The session will also look beyond GHG emissions to other rationales for reducing VMT, including air quality; support of higher occupancy vehicles, transit, and bicycling; and support for land use diversity. The outcome of this session is to stimulate thinking about the benefits of VMT reduction now and in the future.

Beyond “Comment Noted” Improving Your Responses to Comments and Meaningful Community Input in CEQA

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Patrick Angell, Principal, Ascent

Panelist: John Bellas, CEQA Technical Director, Michael Baker International

Panelist: Florentina Craciun, AICP, Senior Environmental Planner, San Francisco Planning Department, Environmental Planning Division

Panelist: Susan Harden, FAICP, CNUa, Senior Managing Principal, Communications, Circlepoint

Abstract:

As CEQA practitioners, we’ve all engaged in a responses to comments process. While some responses are straight forward, we’ve all had our fair share of head scratchers and the dreaded “comment noted” response. In this session, we will tackle best practices for responses to comments—with a twist. We will challenge you to take the conversation further and discuss how we can infuse meaningful community input into the CEQA responses to comments process. The public process through CEQA evolved into a mechanical and sterilized public engagement process that is dominated by groups that have the time and resources to engage, while those without resources get left behind. We will share our thoughts on how to meaningfully engage the community and how to make the comment process more equitable. From this session you will leave not only with best practices on how to respond to comments, but also how to solicit input that leads to meaningful conversations.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Stable Foundations: Current Trends in Project Descriptions

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Emma Rawnsley, Senior Environmental Planner/Project Manager, AECOM

Panelist: Sabrina Teller, JD, Partner, Remy Moose Manley, LLP

Panelist: Manira Sandhir, AICP, Planning Manager & Zoning Administrator, City of San Mateo

Panelist: Tania Treis, Principal, Panorama Environmental, Inc.

Abstract:

The foundation of any CEQA document is a “stable, accurate, and finite” Project Description. Join our experienced panelists for a robust roundtable discussion on best practices, recent case law, and current trends pertaining to the development of a Project Description and pitfalls to avoid when preparing your next CEQA document. Key topics for discussion include:

- What is the current understanding of “stable, accurate and finite” in the case law, statute, and guidelines?
- What are current best practices for incorporating project design features into project descriptions while still avoiding the “project description is actually mitigation” problem in Lotus v. DOT?
- What triggers recirculation, how much change is too much, and how much is possible before recirculation?
- Can a more criteria-based approach be used (particularly in natural rather than urban environment)?
- How can we build in flexibility so that the environmental document can be started early in the design process, but not become derailed by later refinements?

- What are the pros and cons of including a “project variant” or developer-prepared alternative for projects where there’s a chance that the original proposed project won’t be supported by decision-makers?
- How can we manage project applicants who want to start technical analysis before the project description is stable?

Our panelists bring a diverse range of perspectives from which to consider these questions and more... If you have a question about Project Descriptions you’d like the panel to weigh in on, or an additional trend you’d like them to discuss, submit them ahead of time using this Google Form, and we’ll do our best to address them during the panel! LINK: <https://forms.gle/v7LuqqkNw5DQ54tG7>. Note: the earlier you submit your questions, the more thoughtful answers our panelists will be able to provide!

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Successful Mitigation of VMT Impacts for an Infill Residential Project

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Arthur Black, Principal Transportation Planner, LSA

Panelist: Jennifer Hernandez, Partner, Holland & Knight

Abstract:

The Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA identifies that the statutory goals of SB 743 (i.e., the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the development of multimodal transportation networks, and a diversity of land uses) requires prioritizing increases in infill development. But what if infill development is located in an established urban area but outside of a high quality transit corridor where existing VMT per capita is at or above average for the region? If a VMT impact is identified, can it be mitigated? The panel will discuss an infill residential project in Los Angeles County that had a VMT impact. Technical and legal aspects of blazing a successful path for demonstrating mitigation of the VMT impact will be presented. Ultimately, this project application (with the Mitigated Negative Declaration) were approved by the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

AI, AI, OhhhhhMG! How Environmental Professionals are Using Artificial Intelligence Right Now on Projects

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Mike Parker, AICP, Principal, Ascent

Panelist: Christy Ryan, CPSM, Marketing Director, Ascent

Abstract:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is taking the economy by storm. Some professionals are terrified by it. Some are excited by it. But either way, it’s here now and it’s critical that the planning and environmental professional community works quickly and cooperatively to identify the benefits AI promises and the risks it poses. Because this is a new and quickly emerging topic, steeped in technology, expertise in the application of AI to our industry is sparse, but the need for conversation is dire. So let’s talk! This will be a crowd-sourced presentation querying the room using audience interaction tools, such as Slido. This real-time hybrid presentation/conversation will cover topics such as current AI tools being used, effectiveness of tools, AI hallucinations and misinformation, workarounds for those issues, and current risks, especially related to ethics, privacy, and intellectual property.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

How Best to Craft and Use a Climate Action Plan for CEQA Streamlining

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am – 10:30 am | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Lance Park, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Jessica Coria, Director of Air Quality and Climate Change Service, LSA Associates

Panelist: Eli Krispi, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Brian Schuster, Director of Air Quality, Climate, and Acoustics, Environmental Science Associates

Panelist: Alison Spindler-Ruiz, Planning Bureau Manager, City of Long Beach

Abstract:

This session will focus on how agencies and consultants can use the streamlining mechanism for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions analyses under CEQA Section 15183.5 and how a climate action plan (CAP) should be crafted to allow for streamlining while reducing GHG emissions and achieving other climate goals. We will explore how to develop a CAP that can be used for streamlining and review how to determine whether a CAP is considered a qualified reduction strategy under CEQA. We'll discuss ways a CAP can facilitate CEQA streamlining, such as a consistency checklist, an emissions efficiency metric, and a determination of land use consistency. We will also consider which methods and tools work well for developing a CAP's GHG targets and emission reductions. Finally, the session will highlight several example CAPs from a range of jurisdictions to illustrate the effectiveness of different approaches.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Creative Solutions: Compensatory Mitigation When Bank Credits are Scarce

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Amanda Dwyer, Sales and Business Development Manager, Westervelt Ecological Services

Panelist: Angela Lagneaux, Senior Conservation Planner, Westervelt Ecological Services

Panelist: Sarah Holm, Environmental Division Manager, Dokken Engineering

Panelist: Angie Harbin, Director of Natural Resources, Rincon Consultants

Abstract:

Compensatory mitigation is a crucial tool for balancing development with environmental preservation. However, there are scenarios where mitigation bank credits, a commonly used approach to satisfy compensatory mitigation, may not be readily available or suitable. In such cases, developers, regulators, and environmental practitioners must explore alternative strategies to achieve compliance with environmental regulations and promote sustainable land use. This presentation explores innovative approaches to compensatory mitigation when bank credits are not available. It delves into various scenarios where traditional mitigation bank strategies may not be feasible or sufficient, where regions have limited access to mitigation banks, or when unique ecological challenges exist. Panelist's real-world case studies will highlight successful applications of these alternative approaches.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

Complying with CEQA's Wildfire Analysis Requirements

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Tina Wallis, Founder/President, Wallis Law Group

Abstract:

Presentation Overview: The purpose of this presentation is to learn about why the 'wildfire analysis' requirement was added to Appendix G in CEQA as part of updating the CEQA Guidelines, how to comply with this requirement, and current trends in how court decisions are ruling on this analysis in different CEQA documents. The presentation includes a review of the California Attorney General's guidance for wildfire analysis, practical tips to prepare a defensible analysis, and examples of how to approach this analysis for different types of projects. Audience: This presentation will help land use planners, developers, attorneys, and CEQA consultants comply with the wildfire analysis requirement. Takeaway: Listeners will gain an understanding of why this requirement exists, what is required, and tips and practice pointers that will help them successfully draft and defend wildfire analysis.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

Utilities and Service Systems The Crossover of CEQA and Engineering for Large Planning Projects

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Dina Gass, Senior Engineer, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Jennifer Kelley, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Ian Adam, VP, Specialty Practice, Fuscoe Engineering

Abstract:

Using the Wine Country Specific Plan in the City of Yucaipa and the general plan for the City of Ontario as case studies, a panel of CEQA practitioners and engineers will discuss how to address the CEQA thresholds for water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure for larger planning areas. This session will cover how to determine existing and potential capacity constraints to assess the ability of existing and planned infrastructure to accommodate proposed buildout. The session will also address how to navigate potable and recycled water demand and supply issues, and how to coordinate with public work departments, sanitation districts, flood control districts, and water districts. The session will also address the preparation of Water Supply Assessments per the requirements of Senate Bill 610 and hydrological analyses for large planning areas. The intent of this session is to demonstrate how CEQA practitioners and engineering firms can work collaboratively to navigate wet-infrastructure related impacts for large projects.

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

A Toolbox Approach to CEQA and Permitting for Wildfire Resiliency Projects

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor A | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Emily Capello, Senior Manager, Panorama Environmental

Panelist: Anne Crealock, Planning and Program Manager, Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority

Panelist: Caitlin Gilleran, Senior Project Manager/Senior Planner, Panorama Environmental

Abstract:

The Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority (MWPA) formed in 2020 as a joint powers authority with the intent of increasing wildfire resiliency and reducing potential wildfire risks that affect multiple jurisdictions in Marin County. Managing wildfire risk over a large land area such as Marin County requires a toolbox approach to CEQA and environmental compliance, including the use of Categorical and Statutory Exemptions and Project Specific Analyses under the California Vegetation Treatment Program (CalVTP) Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). For larger projects spanning multiple jurisdictions, early public outreach and multi-jurisdictional coordination has also been critical to the success of the program. This session will focus on lessons learned from implementation of more than 30 fuel management projects in Marin County over the last 3 years. We will discuss:

- Toolbox approach to CEQA compliance for fuel management projects
- Use of CalVTP PEIR for multi-jurisdictional projects
- Partnerships among fire agencies
- Partnerships with local communities and jurisdictions
- Approaches to public outreach
- Coordination and permitting with other state agencies, including California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Planning for the Unexpected: Lessons Learned from a Flood Control Perspective

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Joan Valle, Chief of Regulatory, Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District

Panelist: Jason Uhley, PE, General Manager/Chief Engineer, Riverside County Flood Control & Water Conservation District

Panelist: Scott L. Shapiro, JD, Former Managing Partner, Downey Brand

Panelist: Shelah Riggs, Principal Regulatory Specialist, MNS Engineers

Panelist: Dr. Michael Anderson, State Climatologist, Dept. Water Resources

Abstract:

California's extreme weather and wildfire events continue to impact Californians state-wide. As our "new normal" evolves, cities and public agencies must shift to a more proactive approach to weathering unpredictable fires, blizzards, larger storm events, and the aftermath, including mud and debris flows. This panel brings together experts in flood control; climate change; federal and state law and policies that affect the planning, construction,

and maintenance of public infrastructure; and CEQA and resource agency coordination to discuss how proactive planning, new engineering tools, and maintenance programs can help manage our new normal. Riverside County Flood Control, along with associated experts and legal counsel, present planning for climate uncertainty, constraints and tools for addressing public safety, emergency preparation and response, and lessons learned from the 23,000-acre Holy Fire (and aftermath) and the recent Tropical Storm Hilary. Finally, as we plan for climate uncertainty and future natural disasters, this panel will ask: Are we seeing the bigger picture? How can we continue to improve efforts by regional public works and flood control agencies to protect California communities?

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

VMT Analysis - Off the Test Track and On the Road

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

10:45 am – 12:15 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Alex Garber, Senior Technical Planner, EPD Solutions, Inc.

Panelist: Meghan Macias, TE, EPD Solutions, Inc

Panelist: Philip Nitollama, TE, City Traffic Engineer, City of Riverside, Public Works Department

Panelist: Jennifer Hernandez, Partner, Holland & Knight

Panelist: Alisha Winterswyk, JD, Partner, Best, Best, & Krieger, LLP

Abstract:

In 2020 the path to implementation of SB 743 seemed clear. Armed with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA*, shiny new Traffic Impact Analysis guidelines, and the newly adopted CEQA Guidelines, Transportation Planners everywhere were on the way to vehicle miles traveled (VMT) nirvana. In the last few years, however, potholes in the VMT road have resulted in flat tires, road rage, and loss of direction, dampening the initial optimism. There are many potholes practitioners have faced from a technical, legal, and implementation perspective, such as:

- What are the appropriate analysis scenarios to ensure consistency with other CEQA analyses (regardless of adopted thresholds)?
- What is an appropriate baseline when applying the small project screening criteria?
- Should trucks be included in VMT analysis of industrial projects and what are the pitfalls?
- How is using California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) VMT reduction measures consistent with case law on implementable mitigation?
- Are mitigation banks/programs effective means of reducing VMT and can they be used to mitigate project impacts to less than significant?

A diverse panel of experts will discuss these topics (and more!), their experiences, and potential solutions and have an open discussion of other unforeseen road hazards and successes. Participants/attendees will leave with road rage that is less than significant (with mitigation incorporated).

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

The Newport Bay Water Wheel: A New Idea for Keeping Trash Out of Sensitive Habitat

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ryan Bensley, AICP, Principal, LSA Associates, Inc.

Panelist: Ian Adam, CPSWQ, QSD, Principal, Fuscoe Engineering

Panelist: Robert Stein, Assistant City Engineer, City of Newport Beach

Abstract:

The Newport Bay Trash Interceptor Project is the culmination of 9 years of dedicated efforts and over \$5.5 million. This creative solution to coastal pollution seeks to capture and divert trash and other debris from upstream urban runoff before it flows into the Upper Newport Bay Ecological Preserve (known locally as the Back Bay). The project is intended to address an ongoing water quality issue in one of southern California's largest coastal wetlands preserves, which also happens to connect to the Pacific Ocean through Newport Harbor. This innovative project involved the adaptation of Baltimore's Mr. Trash Wheel pilot program to fit the unique needs of the southern California project site while also tackling the complex challenges associated with the site's status as an ecological reserve, including cost and site sensitivity. When completed later this year (2024), the Newport Bay Trash Interceptor will be the first of its kind on the West Coast and is expected to reduce the amount of waste reaching the Back Bay by 80%. This project serves as an example of agencies bringing forward and implementing creative, practical ideas that will protect and enhance sensitive habitat areas and also keep beaches and recreational waterways healthy and clean. From building consensus with agency partners to overcoming engineering obstacles, the Trash Interceptor project team successfully managed to think outside the box and reach collaborative solutions at every turn. Please join members of the project team as they discuss the coordination, compromise, and ingenuity required to navigate the unique circumstances associated with the Newport Bay Trash Interceptor project. You'll leave this session equipped with an arsenal of best practices for your own future projects!

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

CEQA Trivia

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Kristi Black, JD, Senior Environmental Planner, ICF

Panelist: Claudia Garcia, AICP, Principal Planner, City of Berkeley

Panelist: Elizabeth Pollock, Senior Associate, Remy Moose Manley, LLP

Abstract:

This panel won't be at night, but it will make CEQA fun, educational, and an opportunity to network. Come to CEQA Trivia "Night" to:

- Learn from the panelists
- Learn from your peers and their diverse experiences and knowledge
- Connect and network with other conference attendees

The hosts will provide questions on a range of topics drawing on the State CEQA Guidelines and case law, focusing on some challenges we often encounter in our projects. In addition to the hosts working through those questions with the audience, as part of Trivia Night, attendees will also get to discuss them with colleagues and peers to

draw from the diverse experience in the room. Trivia categories will include:

- Alternatives: This or That? Or the Other?
- Baseline: Past, Present, and Future
- Cumulative: List or Now?
- Responses to Comments: Comment Noted!
- Case Law: The Court Said What?

We invite you to learn, connect, have fun, and get special recognition for participating!

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

From Roadblocks to Solutions: Aligning Housing and Climate Goals through Suburban Infill Development and VMT Mitigation

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Matt Goyne, PE, Principal, Fehr & Peers

Panelist: Shannon Hatcher, Air Pollution Specialist, California Air Resources Board

Panelist: Jacob Armstrong, Chief of Operations Land Development Division, County of San Diego Planning & Development Services

Panelist: Bruce Griesenbeck, Senior Associate, Fehr & Peers

Abstract:

In the pursuit of California's housing element and climate goals, the interplay between strategies to reduce VMT, CEQA constraints on housing development, and the promotion of infill housing has emerged as a critical nexus that local jurisdictions must navigate. Aligning housing goals with transportation policies is crucial, particularly for cities facing challenges in meeting their Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) targets. This panel will convene representatives from agencies with experience in aligning housing, climate, and transportation policies, particularly in a suburban or rural setting, with a focus on the VMT screening, impacts, and mitigation best practices. Panelists will shed light on innovative strategies and tools that local jurisdictions can leverage to overcome VMT-related CEQA constraints for housing projects that support the state's housing objectives. This session will explore how most housing types can be compatible with California's climate and housing goals while demonstrating infill housing's potential to reduce VMT and even mitigate the VMT generated by other projects. Experts will share tools and strategies available to local jurisdictions, empowering them to ensure they are using CEQA to effectively balance state requirements related to housing and VMT with local goals related to land use and transportation infrastructure.

Panelists will include representatives from CARB, the County of San Diego Planning & Development Services, and Fehr & Peers. CARB representatives will discuss the role that infill housing plays in achieving California's climate goals as outlined in CARB's 2022 Scoping Plan. County of San Diego representatives will showcase how they have employed their local infill definition to identify priority locations for new housing, demonstrating a practical blueprint for other suburban and rural jurisdictions seeking to harmonize housing development with VMT reduction efforts while ensuring compliance with CEQA standards. Fehr & Peers will present applications related to CARB's guidance for infill housing in suburban and rural communities and the role that infill and affordable housing can serve as VMT mitigation for land use or transportation project impacts

Making A Splash (Adaptation/Resiliency)

Adaptation and Resiliency Implications for Changing Regional and Local Climates

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Arbor C | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Sarah Halterman, Air Quality Specialist, Dudek

Panelist: Michael Hendrix, Principal, Michael Hendrix Consulting

Panelist: Henry Eckold, Climate Adaptation Planner, Dudek

Abstract:

SB 1320 calls on the State of California to develop the California Climate Change Assessment to summarize the impacts and risks of climate change across the state and identify potential solutions to inform policy. There have been four Assessments (2006, 2009, 2012, and 2018) since the adoption of SB 1320, with the forthcoming Fifth Assessment currently being drafted. Previous Assessments report that climate-related events—wildfires, flooding, extreme heat events, drought, and sea-level rise, among others—have and will continue to impact California. The current Assessment is the first to include a series of regionally focused reports, given that the vast majority of adaptation planning and implementation will occur at the regional to local scales. The regional summary reports include specific climate impacts and adaptation solutions for nine regions: Central Coast, Inland Deserts, Los Angeles, North Coast, Sacramento Valley, San Diego, San Francisco Bay Area, San Joaquin Valley, and Sierra Nevada. While climate-related changes will vary between these regions, each will continue to experience the effects of climate change into the future. Climate impacts will directly affect public health, infrastructure, and local economies, and negative impacts on natural ecosystems within these communities will lead to extinctions, migrations, and management challenges. Given that changes are unique to each region and community, the implications for adaptation and resilience will be as well. Our panel will explore the expected changes to four of these regions with a suite of case studies (e.g., changes to oak woodland habitats in the Los Angeles Region and rising temperatures in the Inland Deserts), discuss tools and methods used to downscale model projections for use at the local and project levels, and touch on unique challenges, best practices, and lessons learned related to planning for uncertain future climate scenarios, including those related to equity and environmental justice.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

A Warehouse of CEQA Knowledge: Air Quality and GHG Emissions Impact Analysis Considerations for Large Warehouse Projects

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Ryan Bensley, Principal, LSA

Panelist: Jessica Coria, Director of Air Quality & Climate Change Services, LSA

Panelist: Konnie Dobрева, Vice President of Environmental Planning, EPD Solutions

Panelist: Michael Krause, Assistant Deputy Executive Officer, South Coast Air Quality Management District

Panelist: Warehouse Developer TBD

Abstract:

Commercial warehouse development projects have been a growing sector of development over the past years, and are often some of the most contentious projects reviewed by lead agencies. Potential air quality and

greenhouse gas emissions impacts are the concerns most commonly cited in comment letters received on CEQA environmental impact reviews of large warehouse projects, and these projects are garnering increasing scrutiny from the public, environmental advocacy groups, and agencies such as the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). This panel will review best practices for preparing CEQA analyses for warehouses and logistics projects from an air quality and greenhouse gas emissions impact perspective, including a review of recent litigation, guidance from the State of California, recent and developing regulations, environmental justice considerations, and the latest project design features and mitigation measures to consider for your projects.

A Path Through the Orange Groves (Case Studies/Best Practices)

Mitigation Magic: Beyond Just a Nexus and Rough Proportionality to an Impact

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm | Room: Orchard 2 | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Kristie Nguyen, Senior Associate I, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Mark Teague, Managing Principal, Environmental, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Fernando Sotelo, Principal Engineer, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

Panelist: Josh Carman, Director – Noise, Air Quality & GHG, Rincon Consultants

Panelist: Margaret Sohagi, Managing Partner, Sohagi Law Group

Abstract:

Mitigation measures are the linchpins of responsible impact assessment under CEQA, ensuring defensibility to pass regulatory scrutiny while minimizing or avoiding significant environmental impacts. Nevertheless, in the face of significant impacts, crafting these measures is often seen as a challenge for consultants, lead agencies, and clients alike—and all for different reasons. How can we craft mitigation measures that are feasible yet cost-effective? How can we support sustainable development without losing the heart and soul of a project? What steps can we take to manage the priorities and concerns of stakeholders while still addressing the impact? Can we tailor mitigation to minimize the burden of long-term monitoring without compromising compliance? Join us for a panel discussion on the art of crafting mitigation measures through the eyes of consultants, lead agencies, developers, and attorneys as we examine a series of projects with unique environmental impacts. The panel will serve as a reminder that effective mitigation measures aim to address the what, the who, the when, and the where. The panel will be moderated by Kristie Nguyen, a Senior Associate at PlaceWorks who has prepared air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) assessments for over 100 projects throughout California. Panelists include Mark Teague, Managing Principal of Environmental Services for PlaceWorks; Fernando Sotelo, Principal Engineer for Kittelson & Associates, who will provide insight into transportation mitigation measures; Josh Carman, INCE-USA, Director for Rincon Consultants, who will provide insight into noise, air quality, and GHG mitigation measures; and Margaret Sohagi, Managing Partner for Sohagi Law Group.

Surfing The Waves (CEQA & Regulatory Updates)

How Adjacent is Adjacent? An Update on the Definition of Waters of the U.S.

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm | Room: Orchard 1 | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Daniel Swenson, DEnv, Senior Permitting Specialist, Environmental Science Associates

Panelist: Aaron Allen, PhD, North Coast Branch Chief, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Abstract:

This presentation and panel will include agency staff and consultants providing an update on the latest waters of the United States (WOTUS) regulatory definition, as well as effects on policy and practice, including tips for wetland delineation practitioners, permit specialists, and NEPA and CEQA preparers. The 1972 Clean Water Act established the basic structure for regulating pollutants and enforcing water quality standards, including Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Sections 311, 401, 402, and 404. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of the Army (Army) have attempted to define WOTUS by regulation, most recently in 2015, 2020, and 2023. On May 25, 2023, the Supreme Court decided *Sackett v. EPA*, which dealt with the question: What is an adjacent wetland? The decision also has major implications for other types of aquatic features such as ephemeral streams and rivers. On August 29, 2023, the EPA and Army issued a final amended rule to conform to the Supreme Court's decision in *Sackett*. The battle to define WOTUS, and by extension the federal government's reach over waters on public and private lands, continues.

Bracing For New Heights (Housing & Infrastructure)

CEQA vs Tsunami of Housing Laws

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm | Room: Arbor B | Credits: AICP 1.5, MCLE 1.0

Moderator: Rachel Kwok, Environmental Planner, City of Santa Monica

Panelist: Nick Meisinger, Environmental Planner and Permitting Specialist, WSP Environment & Infrastructure

Panelist: Tyson Sohagi, The Sohagi Law Group, PLC

Panelist: Heidi von Tongeln, Chief Deputy City Attorney, City of Santa Monica

Abstract:

In the last few years, the State legislature has enacted a wave of new laws to accelerate the production of housing, with a focus on affordable housing in particular. The Housing Accountability Act, Housing Crisis Act (SB 330), SB 35, State Density Bonus law, Housing Element Law including Builders Remedy, and other recently passed and amended legislation all require cities and counties to permit, streamline, plan for, and approve housing. With this tsunami of new housing laws, is CEQA under water? Is CEQA a foe, a friend, or a frenemy to long-range planning and housing production? This session will navigate through various State housing laws and the interplay of these laws with CEQA. This panel will include perspectives from a CEQA attorney, a City attorney, environmental planner, and a consultant planner. Panelists will discuss the effects of housing law on CEQA and vice versa and how planners and CEQA practitioners can develop forward thinking approaches to ensure compliance with State law while maintaining flexibility and discretion in local planning and decision making.

Winding Roads (Air Quality/GHG/VMT)

Greenhouse Gas Thresholds: Warehouse Best Management Practices

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm | Room: Arbor D | Credits: AICP 1.5

Moderator: Jennifer Reed, Air Quality Services Manager, Dudek

Panelist: Haseeb Qureshi, Principal, Urban Crossroads

Panelist: Matt Englehard, President, Proficiency Capital

Panelist: Lance Park, Senior Associate, PlaceWorks

Panelist: Brian Schuster, Director, ESA

Panelist: Michael Keinath, Principal & Service Line Lead, Ramboll

Abstract:

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions thresholds have been a challenge for over a decade, but we are making progress. Best Management Practices (BMPs), also referred to as key project attributes, have emerged as a viable qualitative GHG emissions threshold. However, BMP-type thresholds work best when they are tailored to specific land uses. Residential and commercial thresholds have been established by expert agencies, but there are still gaps to make this threshold more useful for CEQA purposes, including warehouse BMPs. The AEP Climate Change Committee presented its first draft of warehouse BMPs at the 2023 AEP Conference. In the process of developing the initial extensive list, they realized that this task was a lot more complicated than it seemed, especially when balancing the evolving technological landscape with what is now feasible. Since then, the Committee has consulted with industry representatives/developers, architects, technological experts, and climate change advocates, as well as researched and reviewed available resources. When considering regulatory goals, forecasting future adoption of technology, and competing interests, the task of identifying a set list continues to be challenging. This panel is excited to present an updated list of warehouse BMPs and engage with expert participants to refine the warehouse BMP list so that it can be put into practice.

2024 CEQA Update

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

9:00 am – 12:00 pm | Room: Arbor E, F, G | Credits: AICP 3.0, MCLE 3.0

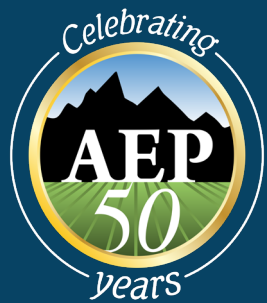
Panelist: William Halligan, Esq., Senior Director/Senior Environmental Counsel, Harris & Associates

Panelist: Amanda Daams, Of Counsel, Best Best & Kreiger

Panelist: Mark Teague, Managing Principal, Environmental, PlaceWorks

Abstract:

This session will provide an update discussing some of the most critical issues to daily implementation of CEQA.

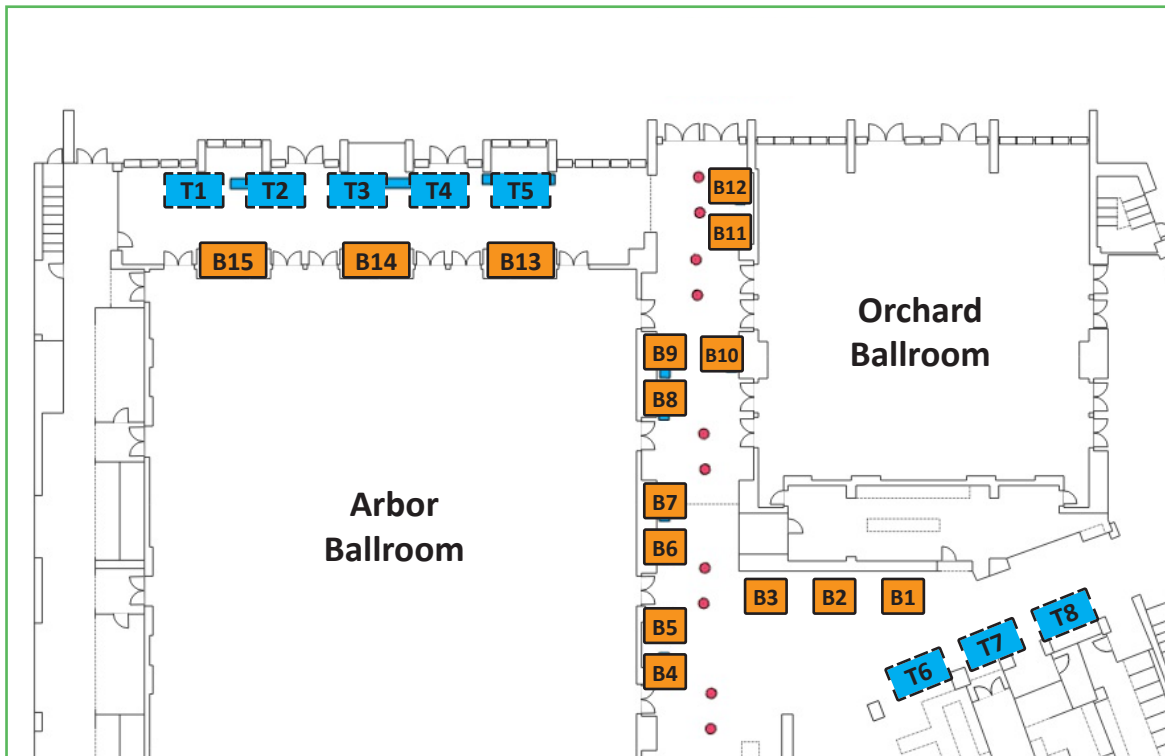


Thank You AEP 2024 Exhibitors

Land and Sea: Cities of Tomorrow

The JW Marriott Anaheim, March 24-27, 2024

2024 Conference Exhibitor Map



Booth 1: Westervelt Ecological Services

Booth 2: GEI Consultants

Booth 3: Rincon Consultants

Booth 4: Aspen Environmental

Booth 5: Helix Environmental

Booth 6: Michael Baker Intl

Booth 7: HMMH

Booth 8: ASM Affiliates

Booth 9: EPD Solutions

Booth 10: Riverside County Flood Control

Booth 11: UC Davis Continuing and Professional Education

Booth 12: 4 LEAF, Inc

Booth 13: PlaceWorks

Booth 14: SWCA

Booth 15: AECOM



Tabletop 1: EDR/Lightbox

Tabletop 2: Anchor QEA

Tabletop 3: RES

Tabletop 4: ICF

Tabletop 5: CSG Consultants

Tabletop 6: Ascent Environmental

Tabletop 7: GTS

Tabletop 8: Solano Press



For more information, please contact:
Lynne Bynder, AEP Executive Director: lbynder@califaep.org

AEP 2025

CA State Conference
Seeds of Change,
Waves of
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April 6-9, 2025 at Zachari Dunes on
Mandalay Beach, Oxnard CA



Save the Date: April 6-9, 2025

Seeds of Change, Waves of Progress

Zachari Dunes on Mandalay Beach, Oxnard

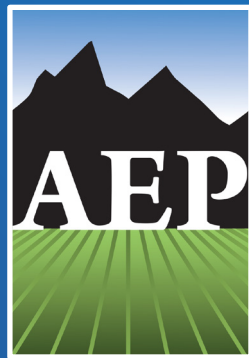
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