

JOIN US FOR THE 2025

CALAFCO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 22 – 24, 2025

Wyndham San Diego Bayside
1355 N Harbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92101

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | PRE-CONFERENCE GENERAL SESSION:

So, You Think You Know LAFCO? Challenge & Expand Your Knowledge in The LAFCO Pyramid

Join us for the most fun you'll ever have at a "LAFCO 101" session. This is not your ordinary "Beyond the Basics" ...it's so much more! Think you know LAFCO? Challenge and expand your LAFCO knowledge in this uniquely interactive session, styled after the classic game show *The \$100,000 Pyramid*! With four "celebrity" guest speakers (all tenured LAFCO professionals) giving out clues, contestants and the audience (that means everyone) will tackle everything from LAFCO history to tricky boundary powers and beyond. It's a fun, fast-paced way to sharpen your understanding while enjoying some friendly competition. Come prepared to meet new people, learn, and have some fun!

Location: Coast Ballroom

Moderator: Joe Serrano, Executive Officer, Santa Cruz LAFCO

Panelists: Michelle McIntyre, Executive Officer, Placer LAFCO; Paula de Sousa, Partner, Best Best & Krieger; Shane Stark, Commissioner, Santa Barbara LAFCO

1:30 p.m. | CONFERENCE OPENING

Location: Pacific A & B

Speakers: Gay Jones, CALAFCO Board Chair & Commissioner, Sacramento LAFCO; Anita Paque, CALAFCO Conference Chair & Commissioner, Calaveras LAFCO; José Henríquez, CALAFCO Interim Executive Director & Executive Officer, Sacramento LAFCO; San Diego County Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, District 3 (*invited - pending confirmation*)

2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m. | KEYNOTE SPEAKER DAVID MARQUET

Location: Pacific A & B

Sponsored by: CV Strategies



3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. | REFRESHMENT BREAK WITH SPONSORS

Location: Pacific C

3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | GENERAL SESSION

How Am I Supposed to Know That??? Moving From Guessing to Knowing – A Fireside Chat

The LAFCO world is complex and often confusing – there’s no way to know it all and often learning is trial by fire. This session offers 4 unique perspectives of the top things commissioners and staff would highly benefit from knowing and understanding. Join us for an engaging fireside chat with a powerhouse panel of LAFCO professionals. And because we’ve all been there – or are there now – audience members will also share their perspective on what’s the most important thing(s) for commissioners and staff to know and understand. The session promises some unforgettable “lessons learned” perspectives and key take-a-ways for commissioners and staff alike.

Location: Pacific A & B

Moderator: Francisco Estrada, Analyst, Santa Cruz LAFCO

Speakers: Mario Gardea, Commissioner, San Joaquin LAFCO; Colette Santsche, Executive Officer, Humboldt & Trinity LAFCOs; Sblend Sblendorio, Commissioner, Alameda LAFCO; Malathy Subramanian, Partner, Best Best & Krieger

5:15 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. | CALAFCO WELCOME RECEPTION

Location: Terrace

DINNER ON YOUR OWN

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | BREAKFAST BUFFET

Location: Terrace

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. | REGIONAL CAUCUS MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS

Location:

Central Region – West Coast Ballroom

Coastal Region – Pacific D

Northern Region – East Coast Ballroom

Southern Region – Embarcadero

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | CALAFCO ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

Location: Pacific A & B

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | REFRESHMENT BREAK WITH SPONSORS

Location: Pacific C

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025

10:45 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | REGIONAL AND ATTORNEY ROUNDTABLES

Location:

Central Region – West Coast Ballroom

Coastal Region – Pacific D

Northern Region – East Coast Ballroom

Southern Region – Embarcadero

Legal Counsel – Captains IV

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. | LUNCH

Location: Pacific A & B

Luncheon Keynote Speaker: CA State Senator Dave Cortese, District 15
(invited - pending confirmation)



1:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Reimagining Governance & Growth for California's Forgotten Communities

Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs) continue to face persistent challenges – limited access to clean water, inadequate infrastructure, and exclusion from critical planning decisions. This session explores how equity can be embedded into boundary decisions, service reviews, and long-term planning. Participants will hear from panelists about innovative approaches and strategies that have advanced infrastructure, services, and equity in unincorporated areas. Attendees will leave with actionable insights on how LAFCOs can encourage infrastructure investments in underserved areas through Municipal Service Reviews, Sphere of Influence updates, and annexation policies.

Location: Coast Ballroom

Moderator: Brandon Fender, Senior Associate and Project Manager, RSG, Inc.

Speakers: Jason Fried, Executive Officer, Marin LAFCO; Alfonso Ruiz-Delgado, Assistant Director, Unincorporated Areas for Supervisorial District 2, County of Los Angeles; Tyler Webb, Deputy, Unincorporated Area Specialist for Supervisorial District 2, County of Los Angeles; Kurt Wilson, Executive Director, Western Riverside Council of Governments

Incorporations in the New World – What Makes Them Successful?

On July 1, 2024, Mountain House became California's 483rd incorporated city, with a population of 25,108, and is a largely bedroom community developed over the past 25 years in eastern San Joaquin County. It was the first new city in the state since Jurupa Valley incorporated 13 years earlier. While incorporations used to be more common, many communities in California continue pursuing steps and applications to start their own incorporation processes. This session explores why incorporation worked in Mountain House, the role of revenue neutrality, and how LAFCOs can be ready for these proposals, sharing statistics and best practices from past initiatives.

Location: Pacific D

Moderator: Steve Sanchez, Commissioner, Riverside LAFCO

Speakers: Rod Butler, City Manager, City of Jurupa Valley; JD Hightower, Executive Officer, San Joaquin LAFCO; Jim Simon, Principal, RSG, Inc.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025

3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. | REFRESHMENT BREAK WITH SPONSORS

3:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. | BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Local Government Reorganization – What Tools Are In/Out of LAFCO's Toolbox?

As communities change and service demands shift, LAFCOs play a key role in enhancing service delivery, fiscal stability, and public welfare. This session explores mechanisms to address inefficiencies and improve outcomes, particularly for fire protection and water services. We will explore how LAFCOs can strengthen Municipal Service Reviews, address failing districts, leverage SB 938, and guide participants in identifying early signs of fiscal distress while navigating the legal and financial frameworks for reorganization. Real-world examples from the panel will illustrate how strategic reorganizations have resolved service gaps and strengthened local governance.

Location: Coast Ballroom

Moderator: Carol Ieromnimon, Associate, RSG, Inc.

Speakers: Jeff Collins, Director, San Diego County Fire District; Christine Crawford, Executive Officer, Yolo LAFCO; Tom Kennedy, President, Kennedy Water Consulting

Cleared for Takeoff: Using Technology to Bring LAFCOs Into the 21st Century

Technology is transforming how public agencies operate and LAFCOs are no exception. This session explores practical, proven ways LAFCOs can incorporate tools like artificial intelligence (AI), digital document management systems, and GIS platforms to streamline workflows, enhance transparency, and expand capacity. Featuring live demonstrations and real-world examples, we will provide hands-on insights into how all LAFCOs can modernize operations without major investments. We will also explore strategies for successful adoption and staff training to ensure long-term success. This session is ideal for both commissioners and staff looking to innovate in a grounded, mission-driven way.

Location: Pacific D

Moderator: Amanda Ross, Founder, South Fork Consulting

Speakers: Shannon Costa, Executive Officer, Butte LAFCO; Andrea Ozdy, Deputy Executive Officer, Ventura LAFCO; Mitzi Stites, Clerk/Analyst, San Joaquin LAFCO

5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. | CALAFCO PRE-DINNER COCKTAIL RECEPTION WITH SPONSORS

Location: Pacific C

6:30 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. | CALAFCO AWARDS BANQUET

Location: Pacific A & B

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2025

7:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. | BREAKFAST BUFFET

Location: Terrace

7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. | CALAFCO BOARD OF DIRECTORS BREAKFAST AND MEETING

Location: Embarcadero

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | GENERAL SESSION

Where the Farmland Meets the Front Porch: How do LAFCOs Protect Ag Lands and Increase the Supply of Housing?

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act sets forth the State Legislature's goals of both preserving California's prime agricultural lands and facilitating orderly growth and development – particularly the need for housing at all income levels. How best can LAFCOs protect farmland when new housing is desperately needed? Our panel of LAFCO commissioners and executive officers will share their experiences and strategies for navigating a balance between these two essential, but sometimes competing, objectives. Attendees will be encouraged to contribute their own insights and suggestions to this conversational session about LAFCO's fundamental task of balancing agricultural preservation with orderly development.

Location: Pacific A & B

Sponsored by: Best Best & Krieger

Moderator: Wendy Root Askew, Commissioner, Monterey LAFCO

Speakers: Diane Burgis, Commissioner, Contra Costa LAFCO; Shannon Costa, Executive Officer, Butte LAFCO; Lucas Frerichs, Commissioner, Yolo LAFCO; Rachel Jones, Executive Officer, Alameda LAFCO; James Kyriaco, Commissioner, Santa Barbara LAFCO

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. | REFRESHMENT BREAK WITH SPONSORS

Location: Pacific C

10:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | GENERAL SESSION

CALAFCO Legislative Update: The Good, the Bad & the Future

We're back by popular demand! Here we are at the end of another legislative year. Join us as we recap the 2025 legislative impacts on LAFCOs and look ahead to what's on the CALAFCO legislative menu for 2026.

Location: Pacific A & B

Speakers: José Henríquez, Legislative Committee Chair, Interim Executive Director, CALAFCO & Executive Officer, Sacramento LAFCO; Kai Luoma, Legislative Committee Vice Chair, Executive Officer, Ventura LAFCO

12:00 p.m. | CONFERENCE ADJOURNS