



County of San Bernardino

2018 State Legislative Platform



The largest of the over 3,000 counties in the U.S. by geographic area and the 12th largest by population, San Bernardino County enjoyed a robust economy prior to the collapse of the housing and financial markets. With the decline of traditional revenue streams such as property and sales tax, the County was forced to make difficult budget decisions. Even as the economy and the State's fiscal condition has improved, major fiscal challenges to the County remain.

In order for the County to continue to provide quality services, assistance from the State and continued partnership with the delegation is imperative. In this platform, you will find San Bernardino County's state legislative priorities for 2018.

Based on principles of fiscal stability, preservation of local control, efficient service delivery and operations, and the promotion of inter-agency cooperation, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors provides specific direction and overall policy guidance by adopting a legislative platform annually.

The Platform is arranged by Legislative Priorities, County Sponsored Proposals, Legislative Positions, and Policy Statements. The Legislative Priorities section describes the County's legislative goals and outlines the legislative agenda for the current year. The County Sponsored Proposals section provides a summary of specific statutory changes the County is seeking in the current legislative session. Finally, the Legislative Positions and Policy Statements provide general policy direction when developing a position on pending legislation.

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The Legislative Priorities section describes the County's legislative goals and outlines the legislative agenda for the current year, which includes access to housing, improving the local economy, recovering from the December 2nd Tragedy, reducing and preventing homelessness, and regulatory reform, project streamlining and expediting.

IMPROVE THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The average business operating cost per job in California is 19 percent higher than the national average. This can be attributed to energy and labor costs as well regulatory requirements. Despite these challenges, San Bernardino County is home to one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the nation. Its economy is built upon a diverse base of industries ranging from international trade to manufacturing and professional services. In order to ensure our local economy reaches its full potential, policy changes are needed at the State level.

The County will work with the delegation, statewide associations, local agencies and other stakeholders to support legislation or budget actions that will: 1) provide tax relief programs for business recruitment and retention; 2) provide environmental regulatory and permitting reforms that improve California's business climate and competitiveness; 3) attract private capital to stimulate the local economy; and 4) increase career technical training and programs that prepare our workforce to be competitive in the 21st Century.

INCREASE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND ACCESS TO PRADO PARK

The County of San Bernardino operates the 2,280 acre Prado Regional Park in Chino on a leasehold obtained from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), all of which lies within the Corps' Santa Ana River Main Stem/Prado Dam project area. The County is in the process of developing a master plan to improve Prado Regional Park with amenities and activities that focus on improving the outdoor and recreational experiences of park patrons. The County was the recipient of Proposition 70 park grant funds approved by California voters in 1988. Subsequent state legislation authorized the County to sell agricultural preservation land acquired with the original grant funds and use the sale proceeds to acquire replacement property. Pursuant to California law, the County may acquire park and/or open space land in fee or perpetual easements with the Proposition 70 land sale proceeds. The County would like to replace the leasehold at Prado with easements funded with Proposition 70 funding, which will then allow the County to increase recreational amenities and fund improvements that are consistent with the Corps' mission of developing multi-use flood control projects.

INCREASE ACCESS TO HOUSING

Since the 1980s, California has not produced the estimated 180,000 new housing units per year to keep pace with the state's growing population. A significant number of San Bernardino County's renters spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing, leaving little to spend on other essential items such as transportation, healthcare and food.

Housing costs play a critical role in the economic stability of families as well as their physical and psychological wellbeing. The shortfall of affordable and workforce homes increases the burden on families in the County and can undermine family health, stability and children's educational attainment, putting future opportunities at risk and perpetuating a cycle of poverty. In addition to the impact on the family structure, businesses are impacted by the cost of housing. Many employers who leave California or focus future growth outside the State cite affordable housing options for their employees as a major reason for leaving.

The County will work with the delegation, statewide associations, local agencies and other stakeholders to advocate for legislation or budget actions that include: 1) an equitable amount of funding for housing in the County; 2) programs that increase access to housing; and 3) regulatory reforms that reduce the cost and delivery time of affordable housing and workforce housing.

The County will work with the Congressional delegation, other counties, associations and regional stakeholders to support legislation, budget actions or policies that would increase access and permit the County to use Proposition 70 funds to improve Prado Regional Park.

RECOVERY FROM THE DECEMBER 2ND TRAGEDY

On Wednesday, December 2, 2015, our lives changed forever. Fourteen people were taken from us on that tragic day. Many other county employees were wounded, physically and emotionally. Similar to 2016, this year will be a year dedicated to those that were taken from us, to those who continue to recover from their wounds, and to all of our County employees who help make our organization better every day. As we move forward in recovering we remain committed to addressing the unforeseen impacts of this terrorist act.

The County will work with the delegation, statewide associations, local agencies and other stakeholders to advocate for legislation, budget actions or proposals that assist with full recovery.

REDUCE AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is a persistent national problem that impacts cities and communities throughout San Bernardino County. According to the 2017 Point-In-Time Count Homeless Survey, the number of homeless, 1,866, represents a slight decrease over the 2016 homeless count. This improvement is a result of investments in positive programs such as permanent supportive housing, homeless outreach, and aggressive use of the “housing first” and “rapid re-housing” protocols. Despite a decline in the homeless population in San Bernardino County, additional assistance at the federal level is needed, positive programs such as permanent supportive housing, homeless outreach, housing first and rapid re-housing efforts. Despite a decline of the homeless population in San Bernardino County, additional assistance at the state level is needed.

The County will work with the delegation, statewide associations, local agencies and other stakeholders to advocate for legislation or budget actions that will: 1) support initiatives to reduce and prevent homelessness; 2) ensure the County receives an equitable sharing of funding aimed at addressing homelessness and affordable housing; 3) expand the availability of permanent and supportive housing that provides coordinated services; and 4) allow counties to maximize and leverage Federal, State and local funds and programs to provide services for at-risk and homeless individuals.

REGULATORY REFORM, PROJECT STREAMLINING & EXPEDITING

Adopted in 1970, the basic purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) were to: inform governmental decision makers and the public about the potential significant environmental effects of proposed activities; identify ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced; require changes in projects through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when feasible; and disclose to the public the reasons why a project was approved if significant environmental effects are involved.

Unintended consequences of CEQA not contemplated four decades ago have had adverse impacts on economic development and infrastructure projects. As the State seeks methods of creating economic stimulus and improving infrastructure through a streamlined regulatory process, focus is likely to be on the environmental review process and revisions that will allow for additional expediency in project delivery, while maintaining existing environmental protections.

The County will work with the delegation, statewide associations, local agencies and stakeholders to: 1) modernize and reform CEQA to integrate updated environmental and planning laws; 2) focus CEQA litigation on compliance with environmental and planning laws; 3) re-evaluate the statutory and categorical CEQA exemptions to allow the streamlining of projects; 4) promote job creation; and/or 5) support legislation that promotes innovative procurement of projects, such as Design-Build and Public-Private-Partnerships where appropriate for efficient project delivery.

The County Sponsored Proposal section includes specific statutory changes that the County is seeking in the current legislative session. Sponsoring bills provide a proactive opportunity to advance the County’s legislative goals and agenda. This is accomplished by working with the legislative delegation, statewide associations and regional stakeholders.

ISSUE	SUMMARY	ACTION
<p>Access to Recreational Opportunities and Improved Quality of Life</p>	<p>Ayala Park, which is located in the unincorporated area of Bloomington and under the jurisdiction of the Bloomington Recreation and Park District (BRPD) is located adjacent to Interstate 10 and surrounded by industrial properties. Recently, the BRPD distributed surveys focused on gathering direct input relative to the capacity of current facilities and programs offered by the BRPD, while identifying their future recreation needs for Ayala Park. One of the most notable items from the survey data was the limiting factors for visiting the park, where 76 percent of youth households noted personal safety is a major concern for them and 36 percent felt that there was a lack of facilities available to them. Numerous studies have shown that levels of pollution are much higher in close proximity to freeways, and are especially harmful to young children. In response to the concerns raised by the residents, the County has identified a potential relocation area that would complement the new community library, better serve existing and new neighborhoods, and provide increased opportunities for physical activity through interconnected open space. In order to relocate the park, approval is needed from the State because the BRPD received grants funds that restrict the use of property acquired and developed to the purpose for which the funding was requested, unless authorized by the Legislature.</p>	<p>The County will sponsor or co-sponsor legislation that will relocate Ayala Park to a more functional location.</p>

The Legislative Positions and Policy Statements provide general policy direction when developing a position on pending legislation and is broken into areas of cultural, educational and recreational services, environmental protection and health, flood control and water resources, governance, finance and operations, health and human services, housing and land use and public safety and first responders.

CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES

Promote opportunities and access to cultural, educational and recreational services within the County that add to the quality of life of residents and visitors.

Support legislation, proposals and budget actions that: 1) provide residents and tourists with access to County facilities that promote knowledge, education, lifelong learning, recreation/leisure and cultural enrichments; 2) preserve and protect the conservation of the County's natural and historical land resources, including sustainable multi-use on public lands; and 3) provide funding for services that enhance the quality of life for County residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND HEALTH

Promote environmental sustainability that strikes a balance with the local economy.

Support legislation, budget actions or programs that enhance environmental quality that balance the interest of the local economy.

Oppose legislation, budget actions and proposals that reduces environmental quality funding to the region.

FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER RESOURCES

Protect life, property and public health through responsible management of natural resources.

Support legislation and budget actions that: 1) promote sound management of natural resources; 2) assist local jurisdictions by removing unnecessary barriers and costs associated with environmental regulations; 3) fund the planning, construction, operation and maintenance of watershed management or flood control projects; and/or 4) maintain or improve upon the supply of adequate potable water.

GOVERNANCE, FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Improve the delivery of county services, reduce mandates on local government, and promote effective management of county programs by allowing local control.

Support legislation and budget actions that provide: 1) flexibility to administer federal, state or local programs; 2) decision-making authority over the use of state funds, including directing grants or mandatory pass-through allocations; 3) the utilization of technology and innovation to streamline County services; 4) the elimination of unnecessary, redundant, or overlapping requirements or regulations for program eligibility, funding maintenance of efforts, monitoring, permitting or reporting; 5) constitutional protections of all local revenues; and 6) adequate funding for programs the County operates on behalf of the state.

Oppose legislation and budget actions that will adversely impact County operations by: 1) preempting the County's authority; 2) eroding local control; 3) limiting the ability to operate in a reasonable and cost-effective manner; 4) transferring programs from the state to counties unless program control and flexibility are also shifted and adequate funding is guaranteed; 5) exposing the County to unreasonable litigation; 6) increasing County responsibilities or expenses without a viable, adequate and dedicated source of revenue; and/or 7) reducing the County's share of total funding through formula allocations or reductions.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Enhance safety-net services and invest in programs that strengthen the community and improve the lives of residents.

Support legislation and budget actions that: 1) fully fund the cost of State mandated health and human service programs; 2) create, provide and protect funding formulas for services that ensure an equitable allocation of federal funding and reflect complete, accurate and total caseloads and administrative costs; 3) promote local control over health and human service programs; 4) provide greater flexibility to ensure programs are delivered efficiently and in a cost-effective manner; 5) provide for the health, safety and well-being of county residents; 6) diminish poverty and stimulate the local economy; and/or 7) hold counties exempt from fiscal penalties when the State does not provide adequate funding; 8) improve the accessibility and quality of supportive services for vulnerable populations; 9) promote data sharing and coordination between agencies to improve service delivery; 10) align state and federal regulations to improve outcomes; and/or 11) remove categorical funding restrictions allowing for greater local authority to achieve desired outcomes.

Oppose legislation and budget actions that: 1) transfer health and human service programs from the State to the County unless program control and adequate funding is guaranteed; 2) propose funding formulas that adversely impact and impede the ability of the County to deliver health and human service programs; 3) erode local control of the administration of health and human service programs; and/or negatively impact health and human services program sustainability.

LAND USE

Strengthen the County through strategic and planned development.

Support legislation and budget actions that: 1) promote local authority to adopt or plan for orderly growth and development; 3) increase local control and regulatory authority over land use, zoning, renewable energy, subdivisions and annexations; and/or 4) make the preservation of farmland and land suitable for farming economically feasible for property owners and local government.

Oppose legislation that: 1) erodes local land use authority; 2) uses air quality and/or climate change policy as a vehicle to restrict or remove local land use authority; and/or 3) imposes unfunded land use and general plan mandates.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND FIRST RESPONDERS

Preserve and protect the safety of the public, law enforcement and first responder personnel.

Support legislation and budget actions that: 1) provide adequate resources to deliver services; 2) provide flexibility and local discretion in the administration of programs; 3) ensure the safety of the public, property of County residents, law enforcement and first responder personnel; 3) mitigate any potential unintended impacts associated with Proposition 47 and 57; 4) plan for, respond to, and receive reimbursement for emergency disasters, acts of terrorism and other catastrophic events; and 5) ensure continued funding for adult criminal justice facilities and programs that will meet the needs created by public safety realignment.

Oppose legislation and budget actions that: 1) reduce funding at the state and local level for public safety programs; 2) compromise the safety of the public, local law enforcement or first responder personnel; and/or 3) impede the local law enforcement or first responders' ability to deliver services.