



CARPD NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

By: Russell W. Noack, Public Policy Advocates, LLC

January 25, 2019

On January 7, 2019, the California Legislature convened the new 2019-20 Session with much fanfare. As predicted, the Democratic Party picked up enough seats to have a $\frac{2}{3}$ “supermajority” in both houses of the legislature. The Assembly now has 60 Democrats and 20 Republicans, and the Senate has 28 Democrats, 10 Republicans and 2 vacancies. Senators Gaines and Lara resigned their seats as each were elected to statewide offices, Board of Equalization and Insurance Commissioner respectively.

January 7th also was the day Gavin Newsom, the Democratic former Lieutenant Governor and Mayor of San Francisco was sworn into office as the 40th Governor of California. Three days later he released his first State Budget. The total budget proposal exceeds \$209 Billion, which is roughly \$8 Billion more than Governor Brown’s final budget. The 2019-20 Budget includes increased funding for affordable housing, healthcare reform, early childhood education, and maintains expenditures for environmental programs, including greenhouse gas emission reduction and wildfire preparedness and suppression.

For Proposition 68-related projects, the Governor’s [budget change proposal](#) indicates funding for the following:

- \$27,750M Trails and Greenways administered by CNRA has been appropriated for the current budget year.
- \$200M in Statewide Park Program dollars will be appropriated in 2020-21, with the final distribution of \$195M slated for 2021-22.
- \$14M in Per Capita distributions for cities and districts with populations of fewer than 200,000 in counties greater than 500,000 in population.
- \$92M Stormwater improvements is appropriated for this year. Projects must contain co-benefits (i.e. parkland development for water capture).
- \$23,125M Regional Park Program will be appropriated in 2020-21.
- \$37M Block grants for self-taxing entities will be appropriated this year.
- \$23,125M Competitive rural program scheduled to be appropriated in 2020-21.

These are early days but Governor Newsom’s first couple of weeks in office indicate a Governor prepared to pursue an active legislative agenda in cooperation with a “mega-

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majority” Democratic Legislature. The Legislature will now begin the process of considering the Governor’s Budget in various budget hearings.

Very few bills of substance have been introduced to date. However, two measures seeking to enact a “new and improved” community redevelopment law have been submitted. [Assembly Bill 11](#) by David Chiu of San Francisco and [Senate Bill 15](#) by Anthony Portantino of La Cañada Flintridge are designed to authorize a city or county to propose the formation of redevelopment agencies. During the press conference on the State Budget, Governor Newsom seemed to reject the revival of redevelopment and indicated that the State would be investing \$7.7 Billion in low- and moderate-income housing, which far exceeds what redevelopment reformation would contribute to providing affordable housing.

Additional legislation recently introduced include [Assembly Bill 42](#) by James Gallagher of Yuba City expressing legislative intent to back-fill property tax revenue reductions resulting from re-assessments for damages incurred due to the Camp Fire in Paradise, [Assembly Bill 209](#) by Monique Limón of Santa Barbara to provide additional funding for outdoor environmental education programs for underserved youth, and [Senate Bill 45](#) by Ben Allen of Santa Monica to place a Wildfire, Drought and Flood Protection Bond Act on the 2020 Ballot.

February 22nd is the deadline for introducing bills in the new Session and most legislators wait until the deadline week to propose their legislative ideas. The CARPD Legislative Committee will continue to actively review relevant measures as they are introduced.

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