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Steve Forbes Keynotes WRCOG's 27th Annual General Assembly & Leadership Address

On June 21, 2018, WRCOG had the pleasure of hosting the Agency's 27th Annual General Assembly & Leadership Address with keynote speaker, Steve Forbes. The evening was spent hearing Mr. Forbes, Chairman and Editor-In-Chief of Forbes Media, speak to the subregion's leaders regarding economic trends, corporate leadership, and even a future WRCOG feature in Forbes Magazine (maybe...probably not). Attendees also got an early look at WRCOG's newly released [2017-2018 Programs Guide](#); check it out for a quick overview of WRCOG's current initiatives!

The success of the General Assembly would not have been possible without the support of WRCOG's member agencies, our private sector supporters, and of course our wonderful event host, the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. Check out this highlight [video](#) to see a few clips of this exciting evening of celebrating the past year's achievements and looking forward to the year ahead.

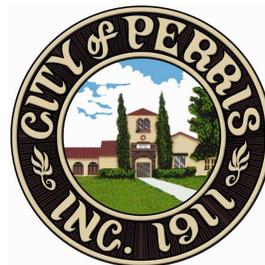


For more information on this year's General Assembly, please contact Andrea Howard.

Contact Andrea Howard

First Three Members Join WCE

WRCOG is excited to announce that the Cities of Perris, Wildomar, and Canyon Lake have taken action to join the Western Community Energy (WCE) JPA. WCE is the Community Choice Aggregation Program that will service jurisdictions in Western Riverside County. Joining the JPA allows these Cities to continue to explore the benefits WCE can offer their residents and businesses at no risk. The next step is for WCE to prepare a savings report for its JPA members. If the report finds that it is favorable to move forward, Perris, Wildomar, and Canyon Lake consumers could begin saving as early as 2020! Time is running out to join the JPA and access this savings potential; interested jurisdictions must join WCE by August 15th to begin service by 2020 – jurisdictions joining later will not be served until 2021. If you're ready to take the next steps, [click here](#).





Contact Tyler Masters

WRCOG's Public Service Fellowship Program Launches Round III

WRCOG has launched the third round of its Public Service Fellowship Program, which is aimed at connecting young professionals from local universities to careers in local government within Western Riverside County. Fellows will be working in WRCOG member agencies for the next nine months, and will have the opportunity to gain meaningful work experience and provide invaluable support to their host agencies. [Take a look](#) at what Fellows and Hosts are saying about the Fellowship Program.



Contact Andrea Howard

Used Oil Night at Storm Stadium is a Home Run!

As part of our ongoing effort to educate the community on proper oil disposal, WRCOG was thrilled to host Used Oil Night at the Lake Elsinore Storm baseball stadium on July 6th. In addition to the Used Oil Program billboard presiding over right field this season, used oil and WRCOG promotions were featured on the stadium monitors throughout the game, and WRCOG hosted an informational booth where we gave away more than 200 oil change kits.



Contact Kyle Rodriguez

Executive Director's Column

A Vague Advantage: How do Councils of Governments fit into the regional picture?



I recently came across this former City of Riverside Mayor Ron Loveridge quote from his address to the National League of Cities during his tenure as that organization's President:

“Cities and towns cannot solve, by themselves, major economic, social, and political problems. We are not walled places. We compete and succeed in a regional, national, and global market place. Many of our problems require us to cross boundaries.”

It's a practical and compelling observation. Issues running the gamut from transportation to air quality to economy cross local jurisdictional boundary lines, and individual approaches for addressing them aren't always ideal.

Due to their multi-jurisdictional composition and geographic coverage, Councils of Governments (COGs) are well-positioned to provide cost-effective regional approaches to issues impacting individual localities. As the saying goes, “There is strength in numbers;” bringing multiple agencies together in a single forum to discuss issues and develop solutions has its advantages.

Because of the way COGs are designed through their joint powers agreements and/or bylaws, they can be flexible and adaptive to issues and needs identified by their members. WRCOG's JPA is particularly vague when it comes to specific assignments, responsibilities or requirements, most likely a purposeful move by its founders to allow for flexibility in addressing unknown future issues.

This vagueness is what separates COGs from other regional agencies, especially single purpose entities. COGs task members to ask themselves *what they want to achieve rather than what they have to do*. They provide a forum where members can work together to respond to challenges that are not unique to a particular jurisdiction and do not neatly fit into the purview of local jurisdictions or single-purpose entities.

The diversity of programs undertaken by COGs reflects this. For example, WRCOG's Transportation Uniform Mitigation Fee (TUMF) Program responds to the basic premise that traffic impacts resulting from significant new growth, can be better

addressed at a scale that is larger than the local jurisdictional level. WRCOG's voluntary PACE programs, which provide financing for energy and water conservation improvements to homes and businesses, have resulted in thousands of properties becoming more efficient, making a dent in reducing greenhouse gas emissions without the need for more state-imposed regulation. The new Regional Streetlight Program, which is helping jurisdictions acquire nearly 50,000 streetlights for the purpose of retrofitting them with LED lamps, will result in an estimated savings to municipalities of more than \$60 million over 20-years. And efforts to establish a Community Choice Aggregation Program will allow for local jurisdictions to purchase energy for constituents at lower costs. Streetlights, roads, energy. Three issues that are not unique to any particular place. Three issues that can benefit from larger-scale attention.

These are interesting times for local agencies, where policies and mandates change frequently, can come without requisite funding, and can conflict with and challenge local goals and objectives. Add to that the rapid growth occurring in virtually every jurisdiction in Western Riverside County and it becomes readily apparent that working together can, in many instances, be better than going it alone. No one said it would be easy accommodating the next million people who will make Riverside County "home" in the same manner as we have the last million. But Councils of Governments, with their purposeful vagueness, are uniquely qualified to help local officials identify, study, and solve big issues that are important to improving the region's future quality of life.

How can COGs succeed? These factors are critical:

1. Elected official leadership that understand the benefits: It starts at the top. Any organization needs direction and leadership from those who believe in the mission and are committed to working together and have a mindset that understands the benefits of regional approaches to certain issues.
2. Find niches that serve member agency needs: COGs need to seek to implement projects that 1) are not peculiar or distinctive to individual communities, 2) are not already being done, and 3) bring a beneficial return on investment (cost effectiveness) to members. One of the biggest criticisms of COGs is that they duplicate work already under way.
3. Keep focused and stay true to the mission: The interface between a COG and local jurisdictions can get murky if the COG loses focus on issues that are multi-jurisdictional.
4. Bring your ideas; be the sounding board for the exploration of regional governmental issues: This is a critical advantage for a COG that does not readily exist with local entities and/or regional special districts. Bring your ideas.
5. Take a few risks: This is a tough one, especially for government, where public perceptions are already negative and can exacerbate aversion to risk. Charles Kettering once said, "99 percent of success is built on failure." Calculated risks need to be on the table for consideration.
6. Embrace ambiguity: Initially awkward, the vagueness of the COG make-up is a distinct advantage. COG members are not constrained with what they can or cannot do. It all comes down to this: What do they want to accomplish?

Contact Rick Bishop

Paul Bishop

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



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