

A large, stylized rainbow graphic that arches over the title and extends down the right side of the page. It features multiple concentric bands of color including orange, yellow, and light grey.

2023-25 IMPACT REPORT

The Institute for Local Government





REFLECTING ON OUR IMPACT



Erica L. Manuel

CEO & Executive Director

A Message from our CEO

The past few years have challenged communities across California in ways few could have predicted. Local governments have faced everything from wildfires and floods to economic uncertainty, workforce shortages, growing community expectations, and increasing polarization. Through it all, local leaders have continued showing up every day to serve their communities with resilience, creativity, and determination.

At ILG, we have had the privilege of working alongside these leaders during a period of tremendous change. We have seen firsthand how cities, counties, and special districts continue to adapt, innovate, and find practical solutions to complex challenges. We have also seen the power of partnership. Some of the most meaningful progress happens when local government, community organizations, philanthropy, educational institutions, and the private sector come together around a shared goal.

Over the past three years, ILG has partnered with local governments throughout California to strengthen leadership and governance, expand public engagement, support climate resilience efforts, and help build the public sector workforce of the future. Through training, technical assistance, facilitation, research, and strategic partnerships, we have worked to provide practical tools and support that help local agencies better serve their communities.

This report reflects just a small portion of the work accomplished by the local leaders, public servants, and community partners we are honored to support. Behind every program, project, and success story are people who care deeply about their communities and are committed to making them stronger, more resilient, and more inclusive. Their dedication gives us reason to be optimistic about the future.

As we look ahead, ILG remains committed to helping local governments navigate change, seize new opportunities, and respond to the evolving needs of their communities. We are grateful to our founding association, partners, funders, board members, and supporters who make this work possible. Together, we will continue building stronger communities and preparing local government for whatever comes next.

Erica L. Manuel



WHY ILG MATTERS NOW

Local governments are on the front lines of today's most pressing challenges — housing, climate, economic stability, and community trust. Yet many agencies face limited capacity, staffing shortages, and increasing complexity.

ILG serves as a trusted partner, helping local leaders navigate these challenges with practical, nonpartisan support. With a 70-year legacy and a statewide network of more than 2,500 agencies, ILG provides the tools, training, and partnerships that help local governments deliver results for their communities.



Our Impact

We help local leaders navigate complex issues, increase their capacity, and build trust in their communities.

California's local governments are navigating unprecedented challenges — from workforce shortages to climate impacts to declining public trust. ILG helps local leaders respond with practical tools, trusted guidance, and real-world solutions that strengthen communities.

Our Focus

At ILG, our work is grounded in four priority areas where local governments need the most support today. These pillars of work represent our commitment to helping California's local governments thrive. Each focus area offers practical tools, tailored training, and innovative programs designed to support effective governance, inclusive decision-making, long-term sustainability, and the development of the next generation of public sector leaders.



Leadership & Governance



Public Engagement



Sustainable & Resilient Communities



Workforce Development & Civics Education



Reach & Impact Snapshot

We support local government leaders, agency staff, and the communities they serve.

483 Cities	58 Counties	2,000+ Special Districts	413,992 Website New Users
496,764 Website Engaged Sessions/Visits	890,320 Website Page Views	25,181 Website File Downloads	

By the Numbers

445,286 Leaders reached through our website, email, and social media.

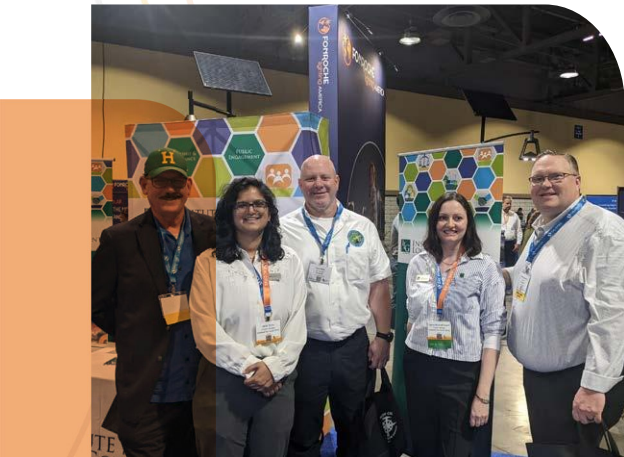
10,124 Policymakers, local government staff, and stakeholders educated through webinars, events and trainings.

2,559 Hours of technical assistance delivered to help local agencies advance climate, equity, and governance priorities.

\$72 Million in grant funding secured by local agencies with ILG support.

Dozens of facilitated meetings that helped local leaders align on priorities and move projects forward.

317 Agencies served directly.





Creating Clean and Equitable Communities

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Pillar

ILG helps local governments turn climate goals into funded, actionable projects. Over the past three years, our support helped jurisdictions secure more than \$72 million in funding for clean transportation, housing, and climate resilience.

We are proud to have been selected by the California Air Resources Board to be the technical assistance provider for its Clean Mobility Equity Investments Program, which encompassed three programs funding community-based solutions to address transportation inequities and boost socioeconomic benefits in disadvantaged communities. ILG's team directed outreach efforts, supported project development, and helped low-capacity communities develop unique partnerships to create successful grant applications totaling \$34 million.

We kept the clean transportation support moving in Stockton, serving as the lead outreach and community engagement organization for the Stockton Mobility Collective — a multifaceted project that enhanced transportation equity and accessibility by providing residents with clean and affordable means of travel to work, school, healthcare, grocery stores, and other key destinations. This unique partnership brought together regional agencies, nonprofit organizations, and community members to increase access to low-cost, clean transportation options.

Our comprehensive community outreach and engagement efforts centered the voices of traditionally underrepresented residents in the programs' design and implementation — empowering community voices in sustainable transportation and ensuring that proposed initiatives are responsive to residents' needs. We have formed strategic partnerships with local nonprofits and community leaders to reach residents who often do not engage, including non-English speakers. Through tabling at major community events, presentations to stakeholder groups, and bi-monthly steering committee meetings, we gathered and incorporated robust resident and stakeholder feedback. This feedback was instrumental in determining the most effective carshare locations, designing a user-friendly mobility trip planning app, and making impactful funding decisions for transportation stipends.





We completed
the second
round of our

BOOST Program, a partnership with the Strategic Growth Council to provide flexible and responsive support to the cities of Barstow, La Puente, Maywood, McFarland, Needles, Rialto, and South San Francisco. In total, we provided grant-writing research and support for 60 grant opportunities, resulting in nearly \$25 million awarded for planning, affordable housing, equitable transportation, and climate resilience projects. Additionally, ILG provided strategic counsel and resources to help the cities comply with state mandates including the development of a Housing Element, an Environmental Justice Element, and a Safety Element — all complex planning documents that our partners would not otherwise have had the capacity to complete.

In late 2024, we kicked off a third round of BOOST focused on the Imperial Valley. We are working closely with all seven cities in the county to

provide grant-writing expertise, governance and strategic planning counsel and support, public engagement training and strategy development, and additional technical assistance to increase capacity and set them up for success if the lithium mining opportunity comes to fruition. While this round maintains the focus on grant-writing and support for infrastructure and climate action, the BOOST team is taking a more holistic approach, also providing support in ILG's other pillar areas, including leadership and public engagement training, and support for foundational work around strategic planning and financial management.



The City of Needles faces unique challenges because of our geography. The BOOST Program has provided the city an opportunity to be heard at the state level and has provided us with the expertise to achieve our goals in obtaining grants and developing policies to address our climate challenges.”

— PATRICK MARTINEZ,
City Manager, City of Needles



The BOOST team has a great understanding of local government operations. We really appreciated the new connections they helped us make, the cooperative planning efforts and how the team assisted us in becoming better local leaders.”

— JENNIFER VASQUEZ,
City Manager, City of Maywood



Building Community through Positive Engagement

Public Engagement Pillar

As public trust becomes more fragile and community expectations continue to rise, effective engagement has never been more important.

ILG equips local agencies with practical tools to lead inclusive, productive, and trusted public processes. We continually modify our training curriculum to address emerging needs, assisting local governments in engaging virtually and in hybrid settings and collaborating with community-based organizations to foster authentic engagement and trust-building. In 2024, we launched Meeting Mastery, a new facilitation skills and meeting design training designed and tailored to meet the needs of local government staff responsible for leading community meetings, workshops, committees, and focus groups. While engagement is increasingly important to keep a pulse on community vision and need and successfully apply for state and federal grant funding, local agencies are also increasingly facing challenges like engagement fatigue and increasing distrust in local government. These trainings provide tools and strategies for local governments to authentically engage their communities and navigate these challenges.

“Meeting Mastery was hands-on, practical, and really engaging. I left with tools I can immediately use to run better, more inclusive meetings.”

— PACHIA VUE,
City of Marysville



ILG put power into practice and boots on the ground, working in partnership with the City of La Puente to engage the local community in developing the city's first-ever Environmental Justice Element. Through an online workshop and one-on-one conversations in English and Spanish at local events, residents shared their lived experiences in an informal and accessible manner. This approach provided valuable insights, created a positive engagement experience for city staff and community members, and fostered a deeper understanding of community priorities — directly informing the Environmental Justice Element with authentic community input.



Planning for the Workforce of Tomorrow

Workforce Development and Civic Education Pillar

California's local governments are facing a workforce crisis. A recent study from ILG found that nearly 70% of the state's cities, counties, and special districts experience challenges with recruitment and retention. These struggles may cause vacancies in critical roles that can disrupt everything from social services to permit approvals.

ILG is helping local governments respond to this crisis by building new pathways into public service and modernizing workforce strategies. Over the last two years, ILG initiated the Improving Diversity Equity and Access (IDEA) Project — an initiative focused on identifying outreach and systems change strategies to encourage more people to explore public service as a career path, funded by the California Workforce Development Board. Through this support, we developed resources for local agencies including: a regional needs assessment of employment trends and workforce challenges in the Greater Sacramento region's public sector, with a focus on local government; a resource hub focused on work-based learning, diversifying the workforce, succession planning, and more; a comprehensive toolkit highlighting case stories and resources; and the development of an online community of practice.

In 2024, ILG launched Bridge, a new initiative to support California's local governments in building their workforce pipeline through non-traditional Registered Apprenticeship



Programs in occupations like human resources, accounting, IT, health and human services, and more. ILG will provide local government employers with the resources, support, and guidance to develop and implement apprenticeship programs that meet their unique public sector needs. We are excited to work closely with jurisdictions to explore how the earn-and-learn model of apprenticeships can increase pathways into public service careers. This project is ongoing and has the potential to provide transformational impact to California's local governments. We are grateful for the support of the Irvine Foundation, the Broad Foundation, and the California Workforce Development Board to continue this important work.

Through initiatives like Bridge, ILG is excited to work closely with jurisdictions to scale registered apprenticeships across California by increasing earn-and-learn pathways into public service careers.



Fostering Crucial Conversations with Policymakers

Leadership and Governance Pillar

At a time of increasing polarization and public scrutiny, effective governance is more important than ever. ILG helps local leaders build trust, navigate conflict, and lead with integrity. ILG partners with local agencies across the state to provide training to reaffirm commitments to good governance.

We engaged leaders in strategic planning and goal setting, and offered training on how to tackle difficult conversations like civility in public meetings. These customized conversations were tailored to meet the needs of diverse California

communities and allow elected officials and staff to have open and honest conversations about challenges, successes, opportunities. Through this work, local leaders learned how to work together more effectively to better serve all residents. In an era of growing partisanship and contentiousness, our communities need their local leaders to commit to values of accessibility, transparency, service, and respect, to lead through these challenging times.

In addition to these critical conversations, ILG facilitated webinars attracting thousands of local agency staff and elected officials on topics ranging from budgeting to legal updates. These webinars provided vital education for local leaders as they work to navigate changes in open meeting laws, contracting requirements, workplace investigations, and much more.

"The ILG team brought a thoughtful, inclusive approach to our strategic plan update that engaged elected officials, staff, and community stakeholders, helping us build on our vision and set actionable priorities for the future. Their governance training strengthened our Board's effectiveness, improved communication, and reinforced best practices for decision-making. The result was not just an updated strategic plan, but a stronger foundation for leadership and organizational success across Mono County."

SANDRA MOBERLY,
County Administrative Officer, Mono County





Our Webinars

Workforce Development and Civics Education

- Strategies for Supporting Multigenerational Workplaces
- What is a Registered Apprenticeship and Can It Work in Your Agency?
- IDEA Summit: Improving Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) to Public Sector Careers
- The Future of Local Government: Preparing to Lead
- From Vacancy to Vision: Proactive Succession Planning for Local Government
- Managing Across Generations: Building Stronger Local Government Teams

Leadership & Governance

- The 2024 Election: What Public Officials and Staff Need to Know About Local Ballot Measures and Candidate Elections
- Grant Readiness 101: Preparing to Submit Competitive Applications for State and Federal Funding
- The More You Know: An Election Year Update on California's New Governance and Ethics Laws
- Building Support for Ballot Measures: Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2024 Election
- Public Meetings: From Brown Act Basics to New Legislation
- Workplace Investigations: Tips From the Trenches
- Leading Local: Artificial Intelligence & Local Government
- Leading Local: Local Government Women in Leadership Virtual Panel
- Keeping Public Meetings Accessible: New Open Meeting Laws for Local Governments
- Budget Season: How Local Governments Can Build and Maintain Fiscal Health
- Results & Lessons from the 2023 California City Manager Survey
- Lunch & Learn: Local Agency Contracting with Independent Contractors

- Lunch & Learn: Navigating Workplace Investigations
- Lunch and Learn: California's New Campaign Contribution Regulations, What Local Governments Need to Know
- The New Economic Development Is Green...and it comes with \$\$\$
- Boosting Local Budgets: Leveraging Sales Tax and Lesser-known Revenue Streams
- A Look Ahead: How a New Redistricting Map Would Affect Your Agency

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

- Advancing Climate Equity: State Regulations and Strategies for Local Governments
- Sustainability at Every Size: How Any Government Can Move the Needle On Climate
- Powering the Future: Cost-Saving Energy Efficiency Projects for Local Governments
- Decarbonization and Energy Efficiency on a Budget
- Complying with CARB's Advanced Clean Fleets Regulation
- Building Fire-Adapted Communities: A Roadmap for California Leaders
- Lunch & Learn – Unlocking Housing Solutions: How CEQA Reform Is Reshaping California Development
- Measure Twice, Cut Once: Creating the Right Wildfire Risk Reduction Plan for Your Community
- Controlling Your Own Destiny: a Local Leader's Toolbox for Reducing Wildfire Risk

Public Engagement

- Using Data for More Inclusive Public Engagement
- Civic Engagement & Gen Z: How to Meaningfully Engage Youth in Local Government
- Empowering Communities Through Resident Academies
- From Surveys to Solutions: Leveraging Feedback to Power Community Engagement



Looking Ahead

California's local governments are entering a period of significant change. Workforce shortages, economic uncertainty, wildfire resilience, housing affordability, public trust, and the rapid emergence of artificial intelligence are creating new challenges for communities of every size. At the same time, local leaders are being asked to do more with limited resources and increasing public expectations.

As we look ahead, ILG remains committed to helping cities and other local governments meet these challenges with practical tools, trusted partnerships, and actionable solutions. Our recent statewide priorities survey reinforced what we hear every day from local officials and staff: leadership development, effective governance, workforce readiness, public engagement, and community resilience remain among California's most pressing needs.

In response, ILG is deepening its role as a trusted source of applied research, capacity building, and thought leadership. We will continue to identify emerging trends, elevate promising practices, and translate complex issues into practical resources local leaders can use immediately. This includes helping agencies thoughtfully navigate artificial intelligence, strengthen civic trust, modernize public engagement, and prepare the next generation of public sector leaders.

As public institutions face increasing scrutiny and polarization, ILG will continue investing in programs that promote ethical leadership, civility, transparency, and meaningful community engagement. We believe strong



local governance remains one of the most effective ways to build trust and create lasting solutions.

California communities are also confronting growing environmental challenges. Wildfires, extreme weather, infrastructure needs, and climate adaptation will require collaboration across sectors and regions. ILG will continue supporting local governments through technical assistance, peer learning, strategic partnerships, and funding opportunities that help communities prepare for the future.

Across our conversations with local leaders, philanthropic partners, and public and private sector collaborators, one theme consistently emerges: communities need trusted institutions that can convene diverse perspectives and turn ideas into action.

As ILG enters its 70th year, we remain focused on strengthening local democracy, building resilient communities, and helping California's local governments thrive for generations to come.



ILG Board of Directors

We are grateful for the leadership of our dedicated Board of Directors.

- Teresa Acosta, Councilmember, Carlsbad
- Michele Beal Bagneris, City Attorney/ City Prosecutor, Pasadena
- Don Bartz, General Manager, Phelan Piñon Hills CSD
- Jaron Brandon, Supervisor, District 5, Tuolumne County
- Brett Channing, Deputy City Manager, Lake Forest
- Daniel Chatigny, County Executive Officer, County of Placer
- Carolyn Coleman, CEO & Executive Director, League of California Cities
- Chad Davisson, General Manager, Ironhouse Sanitary District
- Rhonda Duggan, Supervisor, District 2, Mono County
- Ruben Duran, Partner, Best Best & Krieger LLP
- Yxstian Gutierrez, Supervisor, District 5, Riverside County
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- Graham Knaus, Executive Director, California State Association of Counties
- Justin Lovell, Director of Administrative Services, West County Wastewater District



- Pat Martel, West Coast Regional Director, Cal-ICMA
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- Judith Mitchell, Former Councilmember, City of Rolling Hills Estates
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- Nat Rojanasathira, Deputy City Manager, Monterey
- Lydia Romero, City Manager, Lemon Grove
- Cindy Silva, Councilmember & Former Mayor, City of Walnut Creek
- Hilary Straus, General Manager, Citrus Heights Water District
- Eddie Valero, Supervisor, District 4, Tulare County

Our ILG Team

- Erica L. Manuel, CEO and Executive Director
- Melissa Kuehne, Director, Enterprise Programs and Special Projects
- Morgan Belden, Program Manager
- Nikita Sinha, Program Manager
- Hanna Stelmakhovych, Program Manager
- Kristy Bivens, Administrative Manager
- Alexandra Hunt, Executive Assistant

ILG also extends its gratitude to former team members who contributed to the organization's work during the term of this report. Their efforts helped advance important initiatives and support local governments throughout California. We give special thanks to Karalee Browne, who worked at ILG for over 12 years.



Our Partners

We would not be able to provide the technical assistance, trainings, and resources we do without the support of our partners. Thank you to these organizations for their continued support:

Ascent Environmental
Best Best & Krieger LLP
BDO State and Local Government Advisory Services
Braver Angels
The Edyth & Eli Broad Foundation
Burke Williams & Sorensen
California Air Resources Board
California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
California Association of County Executives
California Coalition for Rural Housing
California Department of Housing and Community Development
California Department of Industrial Relations
California Department of Public Health
California Energy Commission
California JPIA
California Special Districts Association
California State Association of Counties

California Strategic Growth Council
California Workforce Development Board
CLEAResult
Climate Resolve
Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley, PC
Enterprise Foundation
Estolano Advisors
Farallon Strategies
Hanson Bridgett
HdL Companies
International City/County Management Association
Irvine Foundation
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Kosmont Companies
League of California Cities
Liebert Cassidy Whitmore
MioCar
Municipal Management Association of Northern California
Municipal Management Association of Southern California
North/Far North Center of Excellence
Peckham & McKenney
PlaceWorks
PRO Youth & Families
Provost & Pritchard
Public Health Advocates
Regional Government Services
Renne Public Law Group
Richards Watson & Gershon
Sacramento Employment & Training Agency
Southern California Edison
Tripepi Smith & Associates
San Joaquin Council of Governments
San Joaquin Regional Transit District
Schmidt Family Foundation
Sigala Inc.
UC Davis Institute of Transportation Studies





About ILG

The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by the League of California Cities in 1955.

Now, 70 years later, ILG envisions a California where all local government leaders are trusted by the people they serve through exceptional leadership and a continued commitment to building thriving, resilient communities.

As the needs of the public sector have evolved, so has ILG's work — expanding over time to serve counties and special districts and to address the increasingly complex challenges facing local government. Today, ILG partners with cities and other public agencies across California to strengthen local government and support effective, collaborative leadership in communities of all sizes.

ILG provides capacity-building services, technical support, partnership development, and educational resources to elected officials and staff from thousands of local agencies statewide. This work delivers practical, real-world expertise that helps local leaders navigate complex issues, strengthen their organizations, and build trust in their communities.



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