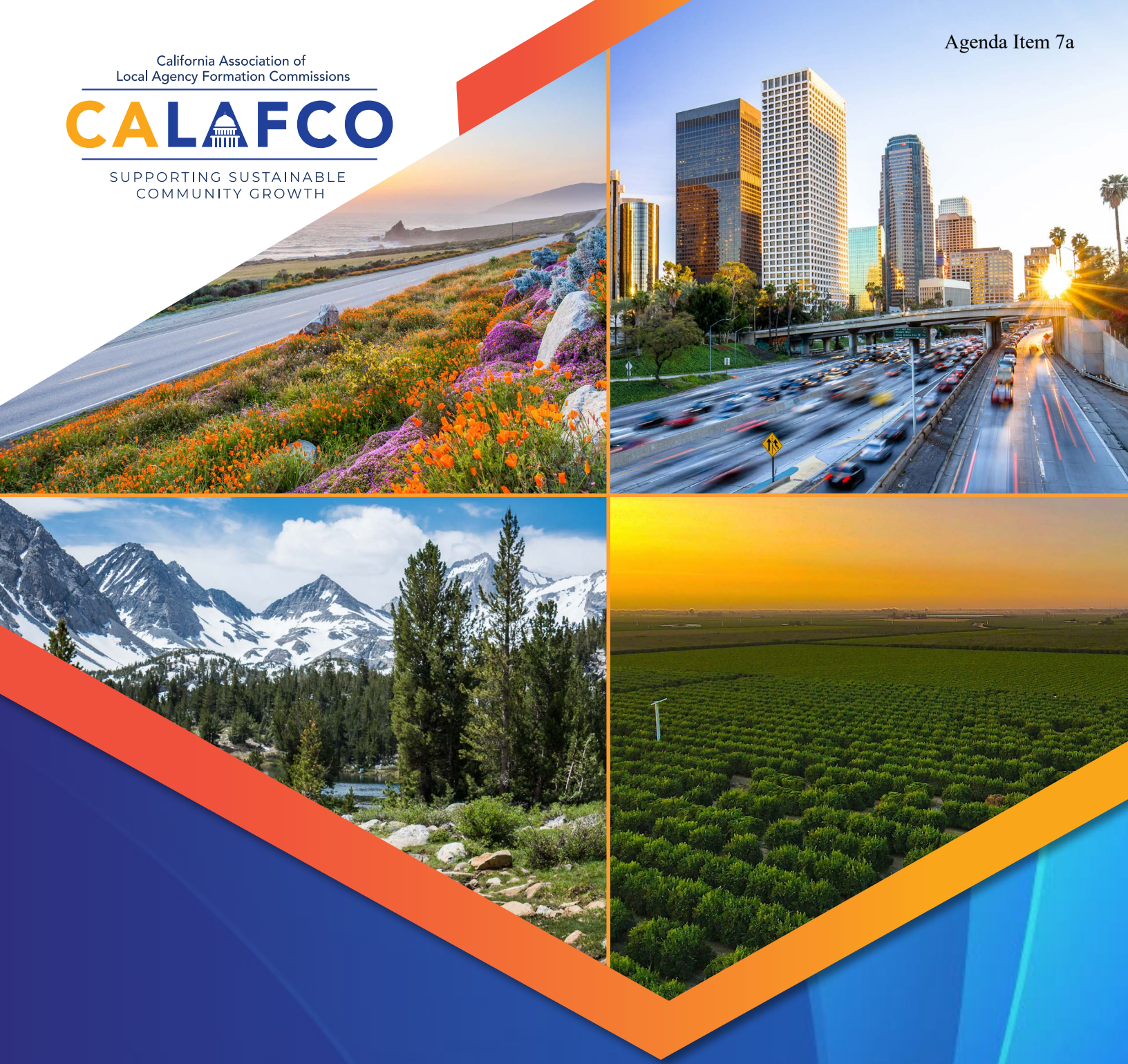


California Association of
Local Agency Formation Commissions



SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITY GROWTH



**Strengthening Communication
& Collaboration for CALAFCO**

▶ PLANNING RETREAT SUMMARY REPORT

March 20–21, 2025

Executive Summary

The CALAFCO Board of Directors, Regional Officers, and Legal Counsel gathered in Sacramento on March 20–21, 2025, for a two-day planning retreat. Purposes of the retreat were to reflect on the organization's evolution, reaffirm its core values and mission, examine and commit to good governance practices, and advance a renewed focus on transparent communication and unified leadership.

Board members in attendance included Jaron Brandon (day one), Virginia Chang-Kiraly, Kimberly Cox, Gay Jones, Gordon Mangel, Paul Minchella, Anita Paque, Wendy Root-Askew, and Josh Susman. Regional Officers and Legal Counsel included José Henríquez (Interim Executive Director), Steve Lucas, Joe Serrano, Adriana Romo, Clark Alsop (day one) and Paula deSousa.

Also in attendance on day one was Jeni Tickler (Interim Administrative Assistant), Jeren Batchelder-Seibel of Marin LAFCO, and Michelle McIntyre of Placer LAFCO. Kate McKenna of Monterey LAFCO attended both days. Member LAFCO staff present were invited to engage in most of the activities and discussions throughout the day.

Day one of the retreat was facilitated by Pamela Miller, Miller Consulting Group, and day two by Erin LaCombe, CV Strategies.



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DAY ONE: *Looking Back,* ← *Moving Forward* →



The Road To Today

The group began the retreat by establishing shared norms, setting the tone for open dialogue, mutual respect, and productive collaboration throughout the two days. Participants reviewed CALAFCO's 54-year history and reflected on the organization's recent challenges by creating symbolic headlines. These illustrated a shared recognition of past conflict and a renewed commitment to a united future.

These headlines reflect individual retreat participant perspectives shared during the session. They do not reflect the collective perspective or experience of all participants.

2024 Headlines

- CALAFCO faces challenges
- Failure to communicate
- CALAFCO Board votes to ignore and isolate the executive officers and their members
- Personal agendas and egos threatened state land use planning policy
- 1925 Telegraph wires cut - 2025 no cell service
- Leadership collusion and mismanagement causes several LAFCOs to leave statewide organization
- Why CALAFCO?
- CALAFCO members weigh value of continued membership amidst divisive decision making
- Storm clouds over CALAFCO
- Not dead yet! CALAFCO working to rise from the ashes like the phoenix
- Dumpster fire only 10% contained
- Destruction, terror and mayhem befalls CALAFCO
- Good governance takes a hit, CALAFCO in crisis
- CALAFCO chaos
- CALAFCO loses sight of who it works for and why
- CALAFCO has wakeup call

2025 Vision Headlines

- 55 years strong - CALAFCO representing all 58 counties
- CALAFCO Executive Director welcomes the 58th LAFCO into the fold
- CALAFCO welcomes back members
- CALAFCO group unites on legislative priorities
- CALAFCO is the most prevalent voice for good government in California
- CALAFCO is stronger than ever!
- A rejuvenated CALAFCO celebrates legislative win! LAFCOs now have the power to annex!
- CALAFCO is back and better than ever
- CALAFCO trust is back
- CALAFCO commits to strong, smart planning and governance
- CALAFCO is back stronger than ever



Lessons Learned



Participants identified critical takeaways from the past year:

- Moving forward, no unfiltered communication
- Need fully transparent communication
- Respect institutional knowledge
- Ensure balanced presentations on issues
- Be open to new ideas
- Respect the organizational culture and each other
- Remember the 2009 upheaval
- Listen to the warning signs
- Everyone needs to express specific concerns not just general dissatisfaction
- Understand the roles of the Executive Officers and the Board
- The Executive Officers and the Board should have worked towards the same goal
- We need to listen to our customers
- We need more communication channels so that we can connect with our members – understand how they want to be communicated with
- There are structural issues creating trust issues - Executive Officers need to have trust in the Executive Director, staff, and Regional Officers
- We cannot marginalize any voice as all voices are important
- The Board is not listening to executive officers
- The Board needs to own and fix it



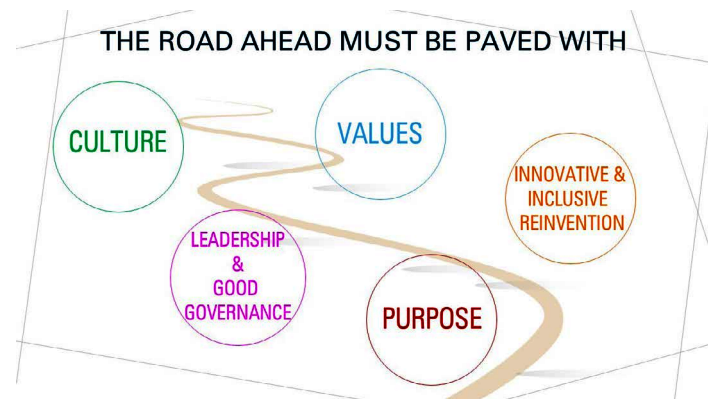
The Road Ahead

Focus shifted to a forward-looking view. The road ahead for CALAFCO must be paved with purpose, meaningful values, positive culture, leadership and good governance, and innovative and inclusive reinvention. These were the themes for the remainder of the retreat.

Purpose/Mission/Values

Mission: As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, CALAFCO supports LAFCOs by promoting efficient and sustainable government services based on local community values through legislative advocacy and education.

Values: The underlying values that define our organization are dependability, efficiency, honesty, and transparency.



The Board reaffirmed the mission and the values adopted in April 2023 and was asked to reflect on the ways in which CALAFCO was fulfilling its purpose, how the values had been demonstrated by the Board during the past year, and what needs to be done differently to refocus on the mission and values.

How CALAFCO is fulfilling its purpose:

- Doing the basics
- Offering some education through the existing online training library, conference, workshop, LAFCO 101
- Provide a space to discuss issues and bring LAFCOs together
- Supporting and enacting legislation and moving new bills forward
- Leadership doing self-reflection in trying to fulfill the purpose
- CALAFCO is still here with some brand value
- Given the uniqueness of LAFCOs and CALAFCO, there is still networking value




















What needs to be done differently:

- Examine "WHY", "HOW", and "WHAT" of our communication
- Review the "HOW" of our educational offerings
- Walk the talk of our values
- Right size expectations (i.e. goals, revenue projections)
- Identify how to hold ourselves accountable, then do it
- Increase engagement with our member LAFCOs
- Be mindful of our language and use positive lenses
- Find ways to work together and acknowledge our shared commitment
- The entire Board needs to be engaged
- Discuss issues using effective conflict and disagreement tools
- Learn to control the Board's space and how we work in it to ensure effectiveness



Building Positive Culture

The group outlined traits they want CALAFCO's organizational culture to embody:

-  Open minded
-  Fortright
-  Respectful
-  Open and transparent
-  Inclusive
-  Dedicated
-  Honesty and integrity
-  Get "it" done
-  Having grace
-  Disagree respectfully
-  Professionalism
-  Regional accessibility
-  Problem solving
-  A-political
-  Recognize the knowledge and value the Executive Officers bring
-  Focus on the greater good
-  Fully engaged Board
-  Mission driven
-  Family

Leadership and Governance

Several aspects of leadership and good governance were examined. First, the Board reviewed the Board member duties and job description adopted in April 2024, with the facilitator noting it contains nothing regarding accountability. It was determined the job description would be part of the comprehensive review of policies and procedures.

Work was done to identify the distinctions between CALAFCO roles and LAFCO roles. Additionally, there were meaningful conversations about the impacts of their leadership roles and the decisions that are made, culminating in everyone making a personal commitment to responsible leadership.



Roles and Responsibilities

To assist the Board and staff in distinguishing the differences in their roles and responsibilities serving CALAFCO versus their local LAFCO, in small groups (the Board was divided into three groups and staff was their own group) they identified and discussed the differences (as noted below). Each group reported out to the larger group for a broader discussion. Everyone was reminded the two roles are distinctly different and to ensure good governance, clarity on roles and responsibilities is critical.

How is your role as a CALAFCO Board Member different from your role as a LAFCO Commissioner?	
CALAFCO Role	LAFCO Role
We're a bridge	We're a bridge
Broader focus	Narrower focus
State level influence	Support CALAFCO legislative efforts
Accountable to member LAFCOs	Accountable to our own LAFCO and the County in general
Help LAFCOs meet their obligations and be a resource for EOs & Commissioners	Help safeguard open space, ag land, safe & adequate water/wastewater, & other municipal services; ensure orderly development
Avoid conflicts of interest	Avoid conflicts of interest
Actively participate	Actively participate
Be prepared	Be prepared
Truth & transparency	Truth & transparency
Understanding	Understanding
Communication	Communication
Responsibility to be aware of broader statewide issues	Provide county-wide equity
Ensure "value-added" for the membership	Study and be prepared
Participate in the annual conference	Have concise meanings
Oversee the Executive Director	Responsive to public input
Be transparent with the membership	

Roles and Responsibilities

How is your role as a CALAFCO Regional Officer / Legal Counsel different from your role as a LAFCO Officer / Legal Counsel?

CALAFCO Role	LAFCO Role
Peer-to-peer	Staff-to-local agencies
Offering legal advice with a statewide lens	Offering legal advice with a countywide lens
Less legal restrictions	Conservative legal advice due to the public nature of the agency
Represent the entire state's LAFCO staff	Exclusively recommend actions to the Commission who are accountable to local citizens
Limited control over functions and operations	100% controlled
Observatory role	In the trenches role
Strategic	Reactive

The impact of the leadership role and decisions made

The focus shifted to the significance of the impact each Board member, Regional Officer, and Legal Counsel can make on CALAFCO during their tenure. The group reflected on the average tenure of Board members and Regional Officers.

Position	Total Number	Average Tenure
Volunteer Executive Officer (since 1988)	12	3.2 yrs
Volunteer Deputy Executive Officer (since 1988)	27	2.8 yrs
Volunteer Officers Total (since 1988)	31	3.7 yrs
<i>No. LAFCOs represented</i>	20	
Volunteer Officers total since 2010 (regionalization)	20	3.6 yrs
<i>No. LAFCOs represented</i>	17	
Board Member (since 1988)	139	4.1 yrs
<i>No. LAFCOs represented</i>	42	
Board Member - since 2010 (regionalization)	68	3.8 yrs
<i>No. LAFCOs represented</i>	36	

Each person focused on how they will positively contribute to achieving CALAFCO's purpose and to building the organizational culture they and their member LAFCOs desire in their tenure as a Board member, Regional Officer and Legal Counsel. Each identified their personal commitment and shared it in the large group.

Specifically, they were asked:

Given the average tenure of a CALAFCO Board member and Regional Officer, how will you use your limited time to make a positive impact? What is the highest and best use of your efforts, energy, and time in advancing CALAFCO's purpose? What are you willing to commit?

Board Member Commitments

Jaron Brandon - Be available to all central and other regional representatives and staff. Honest & transparent discussion on issues. Present bold structural reform ideas to ensure we are targeted, cost efficient, and effective. Join legislative advocacy efforts in Sacramento. Make the motion to move the conversations along.

Virginia Chang-Kiraly - Build CALAFCO into an influential state organization that is listened to by elected officials at all levels, especially at the state level, and affect balanced policies and positive change for Californians. Provide LAFCO professionals with the resources they need to flourish in a productive, innovative, and empowering environment to achieve CALAFCO's mission and ultimately serve Californians.

Kimberly Cox - Provide honest feedback. Be willing to have the difficult conversations. Be open-minded and optimistic about the future of CALAFCO and its value to the membership.

Gay Jones - Develop an outreach plan with CALAFCO members to connect with state Senators and Assemblymembers.

Gordon Mangel - Be part of the solution. Be involved, present and participate.

Paul Minchella - Ensure that all information is shared completely and truthfully to all involved in a timely manner.

Anita Paque - Provide education for commissioners and staff through the conference program. Listen to members' concerns and ideas and work to keep the good and change the negative. Be active in the organization and participate in CALAFCO meetings and activities.

Wendy Root-Askew - Recognize my own limited capacity to engage and not take on more than I can commit to. Remain engaged and fully committed to the process we are undertaking to evaluate and navigate forward. Recruit new Board members who want to help us move forward. Serve in Board leadership at the will of the Board and our membership. Listen carefully to Executive Officer members for direction via the evaluation performed by Pamela and transparently implement changes for benefit of the greater good. Fight to keep LAFCO legislation intact at the state level

Josh Susman - Continue to exceed the average tenure of a CALAFCO Board member with the support of my LAFCO and CALAFCO in order to continue the future success of CALAFCO.

Regional Officer and Legal Counsel Commitments

José Henríquez - Leave the interim Executive Director role better than how I found it. Do what I can to support members. Do better with transparency and rebuild trust. Be a resource to the next interim Executive Director and permanent Executive Director and the next generation of Regional Officers.

Steve Lucas - Engage all staff, especially junior staff, to actively participate in CALAFCO and build professional development goals to the benefit of all of us.

Adriana Romo - Bury the hatchet and strive to improve the organization by being kind and working well with each other for the common good.

Joe Serrano - Actively connect with member LAFCOs by providing regular updates, informing them about upcoming events and proposed actions, and offering debriefs so they are fully aware of CALAFCO activities.

Clark Alsop - Help the organization have the ability to aid LAFCOs in their state mandated mission.

Paula deSousa - Serve as council on legal issues and provide my input as appropriate on issues communicated by all levels of the LAFCO community, for the benefit of the LAFCO community.



A View of the Future

The group reviewed the realities of the immediate future then discussed specific matters of structure and membership. Below are the various ideas that came from the brainstorming session and do not necessarily reflect consensus or agreement of the retreat participants or full Board. Consideration may or may not be given to certain ideas, as is the case with any brainstorming session.

Structure

- Hold open the current structure and Board seats and keep them vacant
- Look at the number of Board members in the southern region
- Create an ad hoc finance working group to look at CALAFCO's revenue and expenses, or have the executive committee do it
- Cut expenses to reduce dues / don't cut the budget
- Dissolve the executive committee
- Appoint Board and Regional Officer vacancies / leave vacancies open until October
- Separate out the functions of administration, finance, policy, and lobbying / need one strong person as the face of CALAFCO
- Reverse the roles of Board members and Regional Officers
- Need a powerful person at the Capitol and with our sister orgs
- We need an Executive Director that is good at building relationships

Membership

- Activate the membership advisory committee
- Keep unification a priority - the goal is to have 58 unified LAFCOs. Try to bring them back and continue to collaborate
- We need a serious conversation about what value we provide members
- Offer the four LAFCOs that are leaving a year of free dues / don't offer
- Offer member rates to all LAFCOs who are no longer members for the 2025 conference





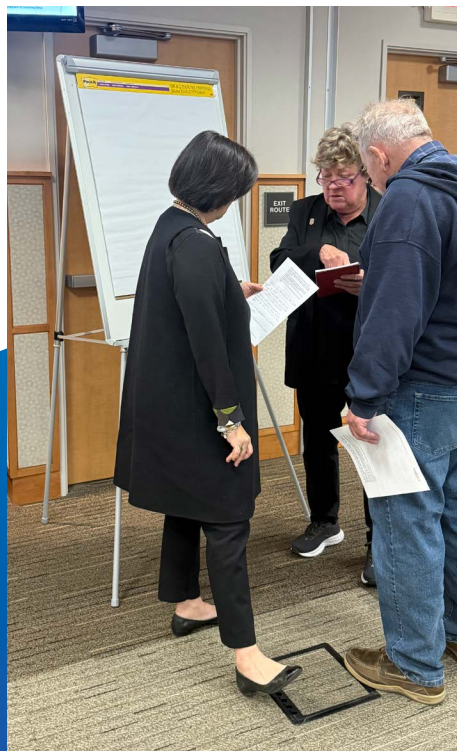
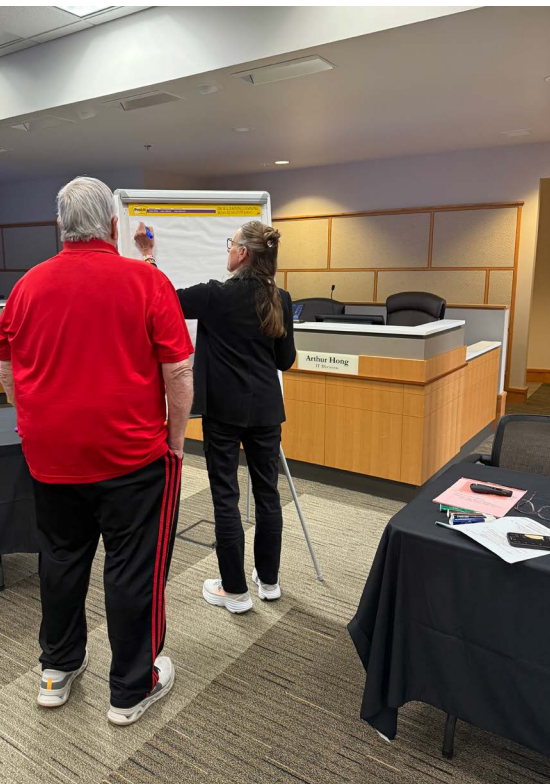
Immediate Action Items

The following items received unanimous support and were added to the April 4, 2025 Board agenda for ratification:

1. Appoint a Northern Region County Board member to fill the unexpired term
2. Launch a search for an Interim Executive Director (up to a one year contract)
3. Offer membership registration rates to all non-member LAFCOs for the 2025 annual conference
4. Approve the attendance and non-voting participation of CALAFCO Regional Officers in all Executive Committee meetings.
5. Maintain the current regional structure



The first day of the retreat closed with a powerful reflection on CALAFCO's journey, acknowledging past challenges while embracing a renewed sense of purpose, unity, and responsibility. Energized by this clarity, participants committed to begin Day Two by setting bold, immediate priorities and directing the creation of a six-to-nine month action plan to help guide CALAFCO into a stronger, more connected future. The action plan is included as Attachment A.



DAY TWO: Communication, Culture & Reconnection



On the second day of the CALAFCO Board Retreat, participants focused on the central role of communication in restoring trust, strengthening relationships, and driving organizational effectiveness. Through shared norms and intentional dialogue, leaders recognized that how CALAFCO communicates—internally and externally—is foundational to its culture, credibility, and future success.

Rebuilding Through Communication

Recognizing that fractured communication contributed to recent organizational strain, the day began with a shared objective: to equip CALAFCO's leadership with the tools to foster trust, accountability, and effective communication. The group acknowledged that communication breakdowns—when left unaddressed—can erode member confidence, impede collaboration, and compromise mission delivery.

Key themes explored throughout the day included:



GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE: Establishing consistent language, shared facts, and clear messaging expectations across all levels of the organization.



RESTORING TRANSPARENCY: Prioritizing proactive, open communication—especially around sensitive or transitional matters.

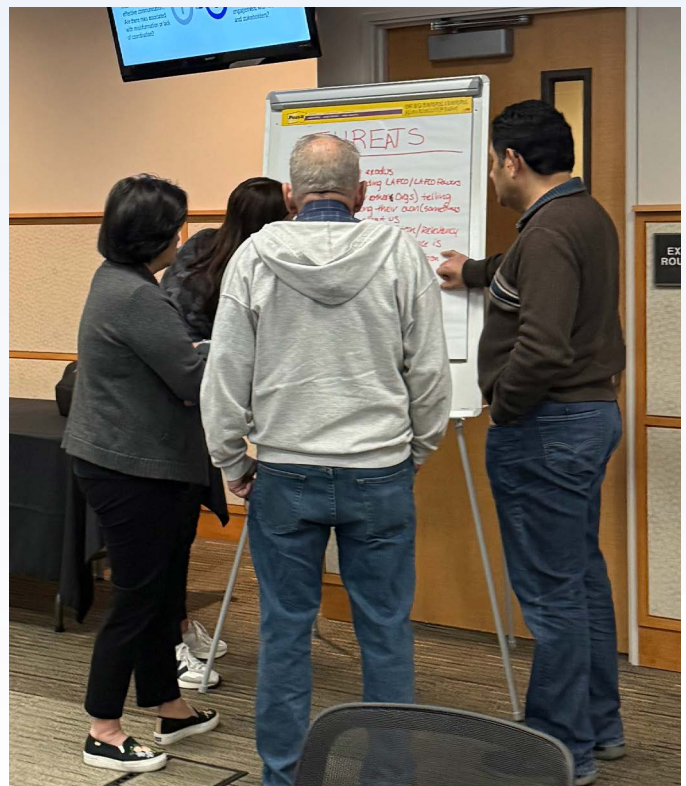


ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION: Ensuring that all voices are heard and respected through more inclusive and responsive outreach practices.



MANAGING DISAGREEMENT PRODUCTIVELY: Leaning into courageous conversations with honesty and professionalism rather than avoidance or reactivity.

The session was grounded in a shared understanding: **communication is not a side function. It is core to governance.**



Workshops and Analysis



As part of the communication reset, participants took part in hands-on workshops and a deep SWOT analysis focused on key message development, audience segmentation, and common communication challenges. Working both independently and in small groups, they refined CALAFCO's core messages, identified priority audiences, and explored real-world scenarios that had previously led to misunderstanding or disengagement. These exercises helped align leaders around a shared voice and revealed practical ways to tailor communication approaches to meet different stakeholder needs—from Executive Officers to state legislators to the general public.

Tools for a New Culture of Communication

Several priorities were introduced and explored to support CALAFCO's communication reset:

1. Strategic Communication Framework

The elements of a draft framework were presented to help align internal and external messaging with CALAFCO's core values of trust, transparency, and professionalism. The Strategic Communication Framework will include:

- Clear key messages that reflect CALAFCO's purpose and voice
- Communication channels connected to specific audiences
- Feedback loops to assess member sentiment and improve engagement
- Guidance on message timing, approval, and delivery

CV Strategies is currently drafting the Strategic Communication Framework, which will be available for the Board's review in July 2025.

2. Communication Norms & Agreements

The group reviewed and reaffirmed a set of communication norms designed to foster a productive and respectful culture. Highlights include:

- Assume best intentions
- Practice presence and listen to learn
- Speak honestly and with respect
- Share space equally and lean into courageous conversations

3. Communications Code of Conduct

The Board committed to adopting a Communications Code of Conduct that will integrate into their broader organizational code. This will reinforce CALAFCO's values in everyday interactions. It sets expectations for:

- Professionalism and preparation
- Clarity and transparency
- Respectful discourse, even amid disagreement
- Confidentiality and appropriate use of communication channels

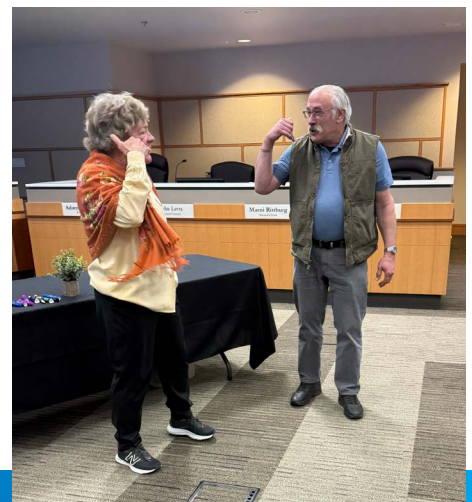
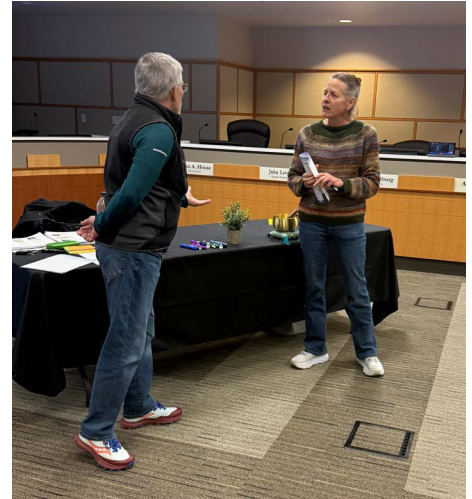
Participants emphasized that communication cannot be one-directional. These sessions are designed to make space for two-way engagement and rebuild a sense of trust and shared ownership in CALAFCO's future.

CV Strategies is currently drafting the Communications Code of Conduct, which will be available for the Board's review in July 2025. This Code of Conduct will be incorporated into the Board's overall Code of Conduct being developed by Miller Consulting Group.

Applied Communications: Role Play and Results

The retreat featured interactive sessions designed to move beyond theory and into practice. Through guided discussions and small-group activities, participants explored real-world communication challenges and identified practical ways to apply CALAFCO's principles in governance. These sessions helped test messaging strategies, reflect on tone and delivery, and build awareness of how language, posture, and assumptions shape trust.

Roleplaying exercises proved especially valuable in preparing leaders for difficult conversations—whether addressing misinformation, managing conflict, or repairing strained relationships. By stepping into past communication breakdowns, participants built confidence, deepened empathy, and strengthened their ability to respond with professionalism and clarity. These exercises reinforced that effective communication depends not only on what is said, but on how it's received—and whether it fosters respect, trust, and shared understanding.

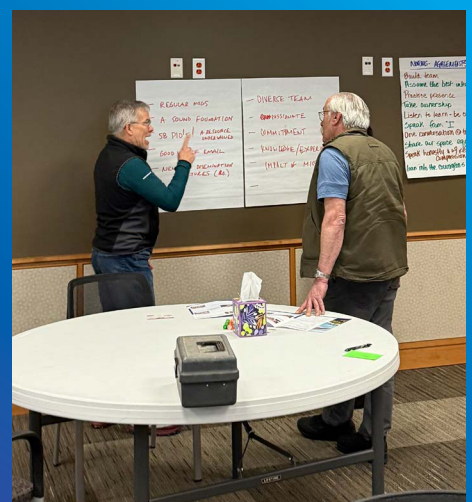


Outcome: A Shared Commitment

The two-day retreat marked a pivotal step toward rebuilding CALAFCO's internal culture and reconnecting its full network of 58 member LAFCOs. As the organization navigates leadership transition, member relations, and other strategic efforts, this renewed commitment to communication will serve as a compass for the work ahead.

Attachment A: Six-to-Nine Month Action Plan

Attachment B: Communications SWOT Analysis



California Association of
Local Agency Formation Commissions



SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE
COMMUNITY GROWTH

PLANNING RETREAT **SUMMARY REPORT**

March 20–21, 2025

Presented by:



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CALAFCO Six- to Nine-Month Action Plan

Monthly updates on progress of the action plan will be included as part of this plan.

IMMEDIATE	Q2 – 2025	Q3 – 2025	Q4 – 2025	2026
<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Hire Interim Executive Director Lead: CALAFCO Note: Approved at 4/4/25 Board meeting	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Comprehensive Review of Structures Lead: Miller MCG Deadline: 7/31/25 Note: Includes Regional, Board, Regional Officers, Dues & Committees	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Activate Membership Advisory Committee Lead: CALAFCO	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Adopt CALAFCO & Board Code of Conduct Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct 2026 CALAFCO U Sessions Lead: CALAFCO
<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Re-establish CALAFCO U Lead: CALAFCO	<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Review of Bylaws & Policies Lead: Miller MCG Deadline: 7/31/25	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Develop Reform Recommendations Lead: Miller MCG Deadline: 7/31/25 Note: Following completion of all feedback, analysis & research	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Adopt Communications Code of Conduct Lead: CV Strategies & CALAFCO	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Recruit & Hire Permanent Executive Director Lead: CALAFCO & Miller MCG
<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct LAFCO Staff Focus Group Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Note: At Workshop	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Cultural Assessment Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Note: Distribute online survey access by 4/30/25	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Adopt Board Meeting Rules of Order Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Deadline: 7/31/25	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Develop Communications Framework Lead: CV Strategies	
<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Support Legislative Committee Lead: CALAFCO		<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Solicit Legislative Proposals from Member LAFCOs Lead: CALAFCO Deadline: 8/31/25 Note: For 2026 Legislative Year	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Schedule 2026 CALAFCO U Sessions Lead: CALAFCO Note: Should launch with the 2026 annual calendar	
<div><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Focus Groups Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Deadline: 6/30/25 Note: Include All 4 Regions for LAFCO Commissioners & Staff Progress: Scheduling underway as of 4/7/25		<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Board Meeting Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Note: To adopt recommended reforms & approve support of recommended bylaws changes on 7/25/25	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Continue Membership Engagement/ Input on Recommended Reforms Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Note: For potential adoption of bylaws changes at annual meeting	
		<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Solicit LAFCO Staff Volunteers For Legislative Committee Lead: CALAFCO Deadline: 8/31/25 Note: For the 2025-26 Legislative Committee	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Membership Engagement/ Input on Recommended Reforms Lead: Miller MCG & CALAFCO Note: For potential adoption of bylaws changes at annual meeting	
		<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Two CALAFCO U Sessions Lead: CALAFCO Progress: Planning underway	<div><input type="checkbox"/></div> Conduct Annual Business Meeting Lead: CALAFCO Note: 10/23/25	



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An outcome of the Board retreat, March 20-21, 2025

☐ Pending Start
 ☒ In Progress
 ☒ Completed

This Communications SWOT Analysis was developed during the CALAFCO Board Retreat to assess internal and external communication challenges and identify opportunities to strengthen trust, transparency, and organizational alignment.

***Note:** This SWOT analysis is based on participant input from the CALAFCO Board Retreat held on March 21, 2025, and reflects individual perspectives shared during the session. It is not a product of facilitated assessment or external evaluation.*



STRENGTHS

CALAFCO's communications foundation has strengths to build upon

- ▶ **UNIFIED VOICE** – Represents all 58 LAFCOs at the state level, reinforcing statewide impact and advocacy reach.
- ▶ **ESTABLISHED TOOLS** – Communication channels include newsletters, website, listservs, board packets, annual events, and third-party partners.
- ▶ **COMMITTED MEMBERSHIP** – Leaders and members remain passionate about CALAFCO's mission and are engaged in strengthening the organization.
- ▶ **HISTORICAL CREDIBILITY** – CALAFCO has a longstanding reputation as a reliable source of education, advocacy, and collaboration.
- ▶ **CORE VALUES ALIGNMENT** – Members broadly support the stated values of dependability, efficiency, honesty, and transparency.



WEAKNESSES

Communication breakdowns have created gaps in trust and consistency

- ▶ **INCONSISTENT MESSAGING** – Misalignment among Board, staff, and Regional Officers has led to mixed messages and misunderstandings.
- ▶ **EROSION OF TRUST** – Exclusion of key voices and lack of transparency have weakened relationships with some member LAFCOs.
- ▶ **UNDEFINED COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS** – Roles, responsibilities, and approval processes are unclear across communication efforts.
- ▶ **LIMITED MEMBER FEEDBACK LOOPS** – No consistent process exists for collecting and integrating member feedback.
- ▶ **OVERRELIANCE ON INFORMAL CHANNELS** – Word-of-mouth and backchannel communications have undermined official messaging.



OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic improvements in communication can support culture change and stronger engagement

- ▶ **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION** – The proposed framework will standardize key messages, identify target audiences, and outline preferred channels.
- ▶ **REINFORCE CULTURE WITH COMMUNICATION NORMS** – Codifying respectful, clear, and inclusive communication behavior through adopted norms and the Code of Conduct.
- ▶ **MODERNIZE TOOLS AND PROCESSES** – Introduce updated digital tools, responsive email formats, and real-time feedback options.
- ▶ **HOST LISTENING SESSIONS** – Regional focus groups will gather input from members, shaping CALAFCO's communication strategy and reinforcing statewide unity.
- ▶ **LEADERSHIP TRANSITION AS RESET POINT** – The search for a new Executive Director offers a chance to reestablish CALAFCO's communication tone and priorities.



THREATS

Without proactive steps, CALAFCO's communication challenges may deepen

- ▶ **REPUTATIONAL VULNERABILITY** – Continued missteps or miscommunication risk alienating more members and damaging external credibility.
- ▶ **INTERNAL RESISTANCE** – Change fatigue or legacy habits may prevent adoption of new communication standards.
- ▶ **LOSS OF NARRATIVE CONTROL** – Unclear or delayed messaging allows others to shape the organization's public perception.
- ▶ **DISENGAGED MEMBERSHIP** – If communication continues to feel inconsistent or inaccessible, member participation and connection may erode.