



CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
AND THE ECONOMY

DRAFT AGENDA

A Special CFEE Conference on Federal & State Infrastructure Spending

The Funding Blitz is On! Is California Ready to Make the Most of the Coming Infrastructure Investments?

February 3-4, 2022

With the recent passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the federal government is ready to unleash \$1.2 trillion across the country to build a wide range of infrastructure projects. While we know California's share is an estimated \$48 billion, many decisions are yet to be made in how these funds are deployed and spent. Even less is determined about the additional federal funding opportunities not yet committed to any state or project.

This conference will provide a blueprint for how much funding is available, how it can be accessed, and what kind of teamwork across California's many jurisdictions is needed to build the strongest funding requests for competitive grants. We will also consider how we can strategically invest these monies expeditiously to advance California's environmental, economic, and social interests.

Hybrid Conference Etiquette and Guidelines

Name: Please input your full name and organization when you join the Zoom line. Our guests and other participants appreciate knowing who you are. We also ask, that whenever possible, you activate your video feed to help simulate the sense of attentiveness and respect that permeates our traditional in-person gathering.

Submitting Questions and Comments: You may 1) type your questions into the chat window or 2) use the "raise your hand" function on Zoom to indicate you would like to ask your question directly. In-person participants are asked to place your name plate in a vertical position when you are ready to speak. We will provide an opportunity for 2-3 questions and comments immediately following each presentation. We will still reserve time after all panelist remarks for our traditional roundtable conversation. Please limit your comments and questions to two minutes.

Chatham House Rule - Cyber Edition: Those familiar with CFEE are aware of our time-honored "Chatham House Rule" by which the Foundation operates. This means specific comments are not to be attributed to any one person in the goal of promoting a more candid exchange of knowledge. At this time, video conferencing is an inherently less private forum and confidentiality is not guaranteed; however, we ask that you help us to uphold our longstanding tradition. This conference will not be recorded, and we ask you not to record the discussions in any fashion or to share specific, attributable remarks. We appreciate you respecting and supporting the Chatham House Rule.

Materials. You will be emailed the final conference agenda, participant list, speaker biographies, and an overview of available federal infrastructure funds.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3

11:30 – 12:45pm	Arrival/Check-In and Lunch
12:45 – 1:00pm	Welcome – Conference Overview and Roundtable Introductions

- Preview of conference topics, speakers, and goals

Jay Hansen, President & CEO, CREE

1:00pm – 2:30pm	Session 1 Breaking Down the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act - What's in It for California?
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California will be the happy recipient of \$48 billion in federal investment that can seed the construction of projects in transportation, energy, telecommunications, water, and more. We may also be the beneficiary of yet-to-be earmarked dollars if we are able to outcompete other project applicants who are similarly eyeing an additional boost. This opening panel will provide a basic primer on the new law and the processes and institutions facilitating the funding flows.

- How much money is coming to California? What types of projects are eligible for the funds?
- How much is formulaically allocated? What agencies will be distributing the monies?
- How much is competitively administered? Who can we go to apply for these dollars?
- Should we have a statewide strategy for disbursing these funds? What might it look like?
- How is the legislature involved in steering federal infrastructure dollars?

***Alex Padilla**, United States Senator, State of California

Samuel Assefa, Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR)

Andrew Meredith, President, State Building & Construction Trades Council of CA

James Corless, CEO, Sacramento Area Council of Governments

Roundtable Discussion

2:30 – 2:45pm	Break
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2:45 – 4:00pm

Session 2
The Transportation Low Down

With the lion's share of available federal funding tabbed for transportation projects (approximately \$40 billion for CA), California is ready to spend big to modernize and expand its array of roads, rails, bridges, ports, and active mobility corridors. How might these funds support the ongoing transformation of our transportation system?

- What types of projects are most in need of federal public investment? What types of projects should rank lower in the funding disbursement hierarchy?
- How quickly can we put federal dollars to use in transportation infrastructure?
- Are there regulatory snags that will slow new construction?
- Will the High Speed Rail benefit?
- With the addition of federal funding, how much total public spending is going into electric vehicle charging stations? How far will it get us to our installation goals of 250,000 chargers by 2025?
- For the \$120 billion dollars disbursed at the discretion of the U.S. Department of Transportation, how can California get a leg up on the competition? What intra-state partnerships should we be building?

Brian Kelly, CEO, California High Speed Rail Authority

Hilary Norton, Chair, California Transportation Commission

Stephanie Wiggins, CEO, LA Metro

Hasan Ikrata, Executive Director, San Diego Association of Governments

Michael Colvin, Director, California Energy Policy & Markets, Environmental Defense Fund

Roundtable Discussion

4:15 – 4:30pm

Break

4:30 – 5:45pm

Session 3
The Rural/Urban Opportunity – Broadband Deployment and Investing in Underserved California

In recognition of the growing importance of a high speed internet connection in every household, California is committed to a "Broadband for All" agenda that will yield major benefits for rural and underserved urban communities alike. With nearly \$9 billion in federal (\$2.8 billion) and state (\$6 billion) broadband monies in the works for California, how can these funds best be spent to connect broadband deserts to the information superhighway? Beyond broadband, what other infrastructure should be built to make these communities more resilient?

- What should modern communications infrastructure look like in rural communities where it is economically challenging to build and maintain networks?
- Who will build these broadband projects? Is it exclusively private firms or will public entities need to partake in this deployment?
- What are the best ways for the state to create connections that facilitate high-speed broadband service for all Californians?
- How can we help provide devices necessary to connect to the Internet?
- What kind of partnerships, and collaborations can occur with federal, local, and tribal governments and the private sector?
- How long will it take to realistically close the digital divide in California?
- What key transportation, energy, and water facilities can be built to make rural California more resilient?
- Can federal funding be put toward wildfire resiliency projects?

Jonathan Spalter, President and CEO, USTelecom – The Broadband Association

Sunne McPeak, President & CEO, California Emerging Technology Fund

Jacqueline Kinney, Senior VP & General Counsel, California Cable & Telecommunications Association

Tracy Rhine, Senior Policy Advocate, Rural County Representative of California (RCRC)

Mireya Turner, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Lakeport

Roundtable Discussion

6:30pm

Reception and Dinner

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4

7:30 – 8:45am	Breakfast
8:45 – 10:15am	Session 4 Strengthening the Backbone of California – What’s on Tap for Water and Energy Infrastructure?

If California is to remain a global economic powerhouse and environmental champion, we will need to continue making serious investments in our water and energy infrastructure. How can federal funds support our water and energy systems, particularly in the era of climate change that is dramatically altering our approach to long-term infrastructure development?

- Carbon capture projects will receive a significant share of federal energy dollars – what does that practically mean for California, a state that has currently yet to embrace carbon capture and sequester technologies?
- What other new clean tech projects are eligible for federal monies?
- What water projects are likely to benefit from the federal package?
- Will funds be made available for improving access to quality drinking water?
- Where should water and energy project developers go to apply for federal monies?
- What types of electricity grid investments will be made?
- To what extent will these funds help to reduce the costs to ratepayers and California taxpayers? Is it enough to move the needle or is it just a drop on the bucket?

Tomás Torres, Director of Water Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Patty Monahan, Commissioner California Energy Commission

***Tom Birmingham**, General Manager, Westlands Water District

Marty Adams, General Manager & Chief Engineer, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Keith Dunn, District Council of Iron Workers of the State of California

Roundtable Discussion

10:15 – 10:30am	Break
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10:30 – 12:00pm

Session 5
Building Out Our Workforce and Making California More Livable and Affordable

Beyond the shiny new infrastructure that will come from federal funding, California can also expect an array of social benefits from this public spending splurge. In particular, this newest tranche of federal funding could play a critical role in building out our workforce and helping to make the state more livable and affordable for our most vulnerable communities. How can we spend federal monies in such a way that strategically develops our workforce and uplifts traditionally disadvantaged communities?

- With new construction projects comes the need for new workers – what goes into training and hiring the construction workforce to build infrastructure?
- How are national labor leaders working with the Biden Administration to deliver gains for workers at the local level?
- How can federal dollars be spent to develop a more robust middle class? What sort of commitment of public spending in infrastructure is needed to sustain a California middle class?
- How does the federal spending plan incorporate housing issues?
- How did historical infrastructure development de-prioritize or deliberately burden certain communities? What can realistically be done to ensure new investments account for the needs of all Californians?
- How can broadband dollars be invested to help urban cores where connectivity remains inadequate for many low income households?
- If the complementary Build Back Better bill is passed, where will those funds be targeted? How would it relate to our efforts to make California more livable and more fair?

Karen Bass, Congresswoman, District 37 – Los Angeles

***Liz Shuler**, President, National AFL-CIO

Alvaro Sanchez, Vice President of Policy, The Greenlining Institute

Don Howard, President & CEO, The James Irvine Foundation

Tim Rainey, Executive Director, California Workforce Development Board

Roundtable Discussion

12:00pm

Summary, Next Steps, and Adjournment

Jay Hansen, President & CEO, CFEE