

From the Desk of the CEO



Dear CALED Members and Friends,

2016 is off to a fast-paced start for most of us, and here at CALED, it is no different. January flew by with a packed schedule of legislative meetings, member assistance calls, affiliate action, the creation of a technical committee for TIF tools, and

the kick off to a significant research project to support economic development. What does that mean to you? New resources, quality professional development, and a focus on connecting our services to your needs.

New Economic Development Resources

Increasing tools and resources for economic development is a top legislative priority for the CALED Board. As you will read in the briefing from Legislative Chair Aaron Laurel in this Journal, we are strongly supporting two pieces of legislation that we believe will help jurisdictions with their economic development efforts:

1. The extension of the California Land Reuse and Revitalization Act and
2. Allowing jurisdictions to acquire and dispose of land at reduced rates if they can demonstrate an economic development benefit.

Additionally, several CALED members have stepped up to create a TIF Technical Committee aimed at helping practitioners implement the new Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District and Community Revitalization and Investment Authority tools. This group of volunteers will also make recommendations to the Legislative Action Committee on ways to improve these tools and possibly introduce new ones.

CALED's Board of Directors and Board Advisors also convened a group of statewide economic development partners for our Annual Legislative Roundtable in January. This event allows representatives from leading organizations to share their economic development priorities and engage in a collaborative dialogue about how we can support economic development in California.

Quality Professional Development

I have some very exciting news for those of you that are interested in quality, relevant, free, and low-cost professional development opportunities to increase your knowledge of economic development.

- 2016 Wednesday Webinars will cover 22 current economic development topics. These are free to CALED members thanks to the generous support of Fresno State University and PG&E.
- The California Academy for Economic Development partnered with Community Systems to offer several certificated online trainings on Digital Economic Development – a must-have skill set if you are responsible for marketing.
- CALED and Fresno State University have partnered with the City of San Diego to offer a 'Keys to Successful Economic Development Training,' certificate course in Southern California for Introduction to Economic Development this August. This is in addition to our regular training offered at Fresno State October 24-27, 2016.
- We announced four Regional Ambassadors and will hold trainings in each of those areas in 2016. You will read more about them in this Journal.
- The 2016 Annual Training Conference – FRESH: Ideas, Perspectives, Directions to be held in South San Francisco, April 26-28. This is the largest gathering of California economic developers and we hope to see you there too!

Connecting Your Needs to CALED Services

We spend a lot of time speaking to jurisdictions and partners to help them with economic development issues, but it is not always easy to discern the items that are statewide priorities that impact everyone (or at least the majority of our members). To this end, we have contracted with a private firm to conduct a research project identifying economic development staff in all of California's cities and counties and to follow up with a needs assessment so we can ensure our benefits and services align with your needs. We believe this will give us rich data to use as a lens for reviewing how we support you. We will also use this data to identify trends in local economic development and share that information at our FRESH Annual Training Conference.

As many of you have heard me say, CALED is your association and we look to you to provide us feedback on ways we can assist you. Please feel free to contact any of our leadership or staff to share your input on our current services and with suggestions on potential new ones.

Thank you for your support and hope to see you at the FRESH Conference!

Gurbax Sahota