
Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission

105 East Anapamu Street ♦ Santa Barbara CA 93101

805/568-3391 ♦ FAX 805/568-2249

www.sblafco.org ♦ lafco@sblafco.org

August 6, 2026 (Agenda)

Local Agency Formation Commission
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Consider Nominations for the 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Awards

Dear Members of the Commission,

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission Consider Nominations and provide direction to staff.

DISCUSSION

The attached letter from CALAFCO Executive Michelle McIntyre announces that the 2026 Annual Achievement Awards nomination period is open. Nominations are due by August 28, 2026.

Attachments

Attachment A –Michelle McIntyre’s Achievement Award Letter

Attachment B – 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Award Nomination Packet

Attachment C – Santa Barbara LAFCO Mike Gotch Award Nomination

Please contact the LAFCO office if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mike Prater
Executive Officer

From: Michelle McIntyre <mmcintyre@calafco.org>
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2026 3:37 PM
To: Info
Subject: 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Awards – Nominations Now Open!
Attachments: CALAFCO Achievement Award Announcement Categories Nomination Form and Past Winners 2026.pdf

Hello everyone,

The nomination period for the 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Awards is now open!

Each year, the Achievement Awards recognize the individuals, projects, and partnerships that make a difference within the LAFCO community. I encourage you to review your LAFCO's accomplishments over the past year and consider submitting a nomination.

One of the biggest changes this year is the addition of several new award categories. These new categories better reflect the breadth of work taking place across the LAFCO community and recognize emerging leadership, partnerships, project accomplishments, and community impact.

The new categories include:

- Emerging Leader – Commissioner
- Emerging Leader – Staff
- Project or Initiative of the Year
- Government, Community, or Public Partner Award
- Equity and Community Impact Award
- President's Award (Discretionary)

Whether it's a commissioner, staff member, project, or community partner, there may be a category that fits.

The attached packet includes:

- An overview of each award category, including the nomination and selection criteria.
- Nomination instructions and submission requirements.
- The nomination form.
- A list of previous Achievement Award recipients to serve as a reference.

A few important reminders:

- **Nomination deadline: Friday, August 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**
- Qualifying period: August 16, 2025, through August 15, 2026 (except for the Lifetime Achievement Award).
- Submit each nomination to me as a single PDF containing the completed nomination form and all supporting materials.
- Early submittals are encouraged.

I encourage every LAFCO to consider submitting a nomination this year. This is an opportunity to recognize the people, projects, and partnerships that strengthen the LAFCO community and the communities we serve.

Award recipients are generally kept under wraps until they are announced during the Achievement Awards presentation at the CALAFCO Annual Conference. If you have any questions about the nomination process or the award categories, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing this year's nominations.

Michelle McIntyre

DATE: July 1, 2026

TO: CALAFCO Members, LAFCO Commissioners and Staff,
Other Interested Organizations

FROM: Michelle McIntyre - CALAFCO Executive Director,
CALAFCO Achievement Awards Committee, CALAFCO Board of Directors

SUBJECT: 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Award Nominations Period Open

DEADLINE: Friday, August 28, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

Qualifying Period: August 16, 2025 through August 15, 2026

On behalf of the Association, I am pleased to announce that the nomination period for the 2026 CALAFCO Achievement Awards is now open.

Each year, CALAFCO recognizes individuals and organizations from across the state for their work advancing the mission and responsibilities of LAFCOs. This year's program retains its established structure with targeted updates to better reflect the breadth of work being done across the LAFCO community, including emerging leadership, partnerships, project-based accomplishments, community impact, and discretionary recognition of exceptional efforts that may not fit neatly into existing categories.

We encourage you to nominate individuals and organizations whose work reflects strong performance, meaningful collaboration, and measurable results. Early submittal is encouraged.

*Before submitting a nomination, please carefully review the nomination instructions and the criteria for each category. **Incomplete nominations, or those that do not follow the submission guidelines, will not be considered.***

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS NOMINATION PROCEDURE

1. Most nominations may be made by an individual, a LAFCO, a CALAFCO Associate Member, or any other organization.
2. Each nomination must meet the specific award category criteria for consideration.
3. With the exception of the Lifetime Achievement Award, all nominated projects or acts of service must have occurred or been completed during the qualifying period of August 16, 2025, through August 15, 2026.

4. Nominations must be submitted with a completed nomination form. A separate form is required for each nomination.
5. Nomination Executive Summaries must be limited to no more than 250 words. Nomination Summaries must be limited to no more than 1,000 words or two (2) pages.
6. All supporting information (e.g., reports, articles) must be submitted with the nomination. Total supporting documentation, including any letters of support or endorsement, is limited to no more than three (3) pages.
7. Support or Endorsement Letters: Nominations may optionally include letters of support or endorsement from individuals or organizations familiar with the nominee's work. Letters should provide specific examples of contributions and impact. A maximum of two (2) letters may be submitted, each not to exceed one (1) page. Letters must be included at the time of submittal and count toward the three-page supporting documentation limit. The quality and relevance of the nomination will be given greater weight than the number of letters submitted.
8. All materials must be submitted at one time. No late nominations will be accepted — no exceptions.
9. Electronic submittals are required and must be submitted as a single PDF document.
10. Nominations and all supporting materials must be received no later than Friday, August 28, 2026.

Submit nominations electronically as a single PDF to:

Michelle McIntyre, CALAFCO Executive Director
mmcintyre@calafco.org | (916) 442-6536

AWARDS COMMITTEE FLEXIBILITY

Number of Awards: The Awards Committee may, at its discretion, select more than one recipient in a category when multiple nominations are deemed equally deserving.

Category Assignment: The Awards Committee may reassign a nomination to a different award category if it determines the nomination better aligns with the criteria of that category. The Committee's determination is final.

General: Submission of a nomination does not guarantee that an award will be given in that category. Not all categories are required to be awarded each year.

CALAFCO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD CATEGORIES

Nomination & Selection Criteria



Every year, CALAFCO recognizes excellence within the LAFCO community by presenting Achievement Awards at the Annual Conference. Nominations are accepted until Friday, August 28, 2026, in the following categories:

EXISTING CATEGORIES

OUTSTANDING CALAFCO VOLUNTEER

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes a CALAFCO volunteer who has provided exemplary service during the year. Exemplary service clearly goes above and beyond what is asked or expected in the charge of their responsibilities. This category may include a CALAFCO Board member, regional officer, program volunteer, or any other requested volunteer.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee must have volunteered for the Association during the year in which the nomination is being made.
- Nominee does not have to be a CALAFCO member.
- Volunteer efforts must demonstrate going above and beyond what was asked or expected, with positive and effective results.
- Nominee can be a CALAFCO Board member, regional officer, program volunteer, or any other volunteer.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria requirements for consideration.
- Equal consideration shall be given to each nominee, regardless of position or role. Only contributions and outcomes shall be considered.
- The extent of volunteerism and overall impact on the statewide Association and membership shall be considered.
- Preference may be given to individuals who have not previously received this award and meet all required criteria.

OUTSTANDING CALAFCO ASSOCIATE MEMBER

AWARD SUMMARY:

Presented to an active CALAFCO Associate Member (person or agency) that has advanced or promoted the cause of LAFCOs by consistently producing distinguished work that upholds the mission and goals of LAFCOs, has helped elevate the role and mission of LAFCOs through its work, and demonstrates a collaborative approach to LAFCO stakeholder engagement.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee must be a CALAFCO Associate Member in good standing.
- Nominee shall have been an Associate Member for the full year in which the nomination is being made, and for at least one year prior.
- The nominee may be an individual within an Associate Member firm or agency.
- Nominee shall demonstrate that through their work, the role and mission of LAFCO have been upheld and furthered.
- Nominee must have demonstrated cooperative and collaborative approaches to situations affecting LAFCOs state wide.
- Proven commitment to the Association's membership through volunteering time and resources during the year in which the nomination is made.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Equal consideration shall be given to all nominees meeting the nominating criteria.
- The level of volunteering time and resources to the Association shall be a consideration.

OUTSTANDING COMMISSIONER

AWARD SUMMARY:

Presented to an individual Commissioner for extraordinary service to their Commission. Extraordinary service is considered actions above and beyond those required to fulfill statutory responsibilities as a Commissioner, including consistently demonstrating independent judgment on behalf of the entire county, developing innovative and collaborative solutions to local issues, and leading the commission and community by example.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee must be a Commissioner of a LAFCO in good standing with the Association.
- Nominee shall be a Commissioner for the full year in which the nomination is being made.
- Proven demonstration of consistently exercising independent judgment for the greater good of the County is required.
- Proven leadership through collaborative, innovative, and creative solutions to local issues is required.
- Proven effective results and outcomes shall be demonstrated in the nomination.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Equal consideration shall be given to all nominees meeting the nominating criteria. Representation type and LAFCO size shall not be a consideration.
- The overall impact of the Commissioner's leadership shall be considered.
- Preference may be given to individuals who have not previously received this award and meet all required criteria.

OUTSTANDING LAFCO PROFESSIONAL

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes an Executive Officer, Staff Analyst, Clerk, Legal Counsel, or any other LAFCO staff person for exemplary service during the past year. Exemplary service is considered actions that clearly go above and beyond what is asked, expected, or required in the charge of their LAFCO responsibilities.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee must be a staff person of a LAFCO in good standing with the Association.
- Nominee shall be a staff person for the full year in which the nomination is being made.
- Nominee can be either an employee of the LAFCO or a contractor providing employee-type services.
- Efforts must be demonstrated showing the individual has consistently gone above and beyond their role, with proven results that otherwise would not have occurred.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Equal consideration shall be given to all nominees. Position within a LAFCO and the size or geographic area of the LAFCO shall not be considerations.
- The overall impact of the LAFCO professional on their LAFCO and the greater community shall be considered.
- Preference may be given to individuals who have not previously received this award.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes any individual who has made extraordinary contributions to the statewide LAFCO community in terms of longevity of service, exemplary advocacy of LAFCO-related legislation, proven leadership, and demonstrated support in developing and implementing innovative and creative ways to support the goals of LAFCOs throughout California. The nominee should have a substantial and sustained record of involvement with the LAFCO community

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nomination must be received from a member of LAFCO or an Associate Member in good standing.
- The nominee should have a long record of involvement with the LAFCO community.
- During that time, the nominee shall have a proven positive impact and effect on the support and evolution of LAFCOs statewide.
- Includes advocacy through legislation, developing creative and innovative solutions serving beyond their LAFCO, collaborative stakeholder approaches, and support for fellow members of the LAFCO community.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Preference may be given to nominees who have also proven experience volunteering for CALAFCO through regional officer roles, committees, or the CALAFCO Board.

LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR

AWARD SUMMARY:

Presented to a member of the California State Senate or Assembly in recognition of leadership and valued contributions in support of LAFCO goals that have a statewide effect. The recipient shall have demonstrated clear support and effort to further the cause and ability of LAFCOs to fulfill their statutory mission and selected by the CALAFCO Board by a super majority.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee shall be a California State legislator during the full year in which the nomination is made.
- Nominee must have demonstrated extraordinary leadership in the Legislature on behalf of LAFCOs statewide, with efforts resulting in a positive impact for all LAFCOs.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- The Achievement Awards Committee shall forward all nominations to the Board for consideration.
- Selection requires a supermajority approval of the Board present at the time of the vote.

MIKE GOTCH EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

AWARD SUMMARY:

Awarded to an individual, group, or agency for actions that rise above expected or common functions; reduce or eliminate common institutional roadblocks; and result in a truly extraordinary public service outcome. Individuals, a LAFCO, or collaborative efforts among multiple LAFCOs or a LAFCO with other entities are eligible. This award has two distinct categories:

1. Protection of agricultural and open space lands and prevention of sprawl
2. Innovation, collaboration, outreach, and effective support of the evolution and viability of local agencies and promotion of efficient and effective delivery of municipal services

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Clear demonstration that the actions rise above expected or common functions.
- The actions reduced or eliminated common institutional roadblocks.
- The actions clearly prove a truly extraordinary public service outcome that is systemic and sustainable.
- Identified unique circumstances and factors leading to the solution or project.
- The innovative steps taken to solve the problem or take action.
- Clear description of the results and outcomes, including short- and long-term effects.

- How this work can be promoted as a LAFCO best practice.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Equal consideration shall be given to each nominee within each category. LAFCO size or geographic area shall not be a consideration.
- The overall impact of the actions and outcomes on the greater community shall be considered.

NEW CATEGORIES 2026

EMERGING LEADER – COMMISSIONER

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes a LAFCO Commissioner who, early in their service, has demonstrated strong engagement, sound judgment, and a clear commitment to the work of the Commission. This award acknowledges the value of fresh perspectives and early leadership in shaping effective governance.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Must be a Commissioner of a LAFCO in good standing with the Association.
- Must have served generally no more than five (5) years as a LAFCO Commissioner.
- Demonstrates active, engaged participation in Commission work during the qualifying period.
- Shows initiative and sound judgment in Commission proceedings.
- Demonstrates early leadership through meaningful contributions to Commission outcomes.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Level of engagement and initiative demonstrated during the qualifying period.
- Quality and impact of contributions to Commission work.
- Potential for continued leadership and growth within the LAFCO community.

EMERGING LEADER – STAFF

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes a LAFCO staff member who has demonstrated initiative, reliability, and meaningful contributions early in their career. This award celebrates the next generation of LAFCO professionals who are building the foundation for sustained excellence in local agency governance.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Must be LAFCO staff (employee or contractor providing employee-type services) of a LAFCO in good standing.
- Must have served generally no more than five (5) years in a LAFCO staff capacity.
- Demonstrates initiative and reliability in their work during the qualifying period.

- Contributes meaningfully to LAFCO projects or operations beyond what is minimally expected.
- Shows willingness to take on additional responsibilities and learn.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Level of initiative and professionalism demonstrated.
- Impact of contributions relative to experience and role.
- Potential for continued growth and contribution to the LAFCO profession.

PROJECT OR INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes a LAFCO-led or LAFCO-supported project or initiative that demonstrates strong execution, clear purpose, and measurable results. This award highlights the importance of project-based work in delivering on LAFCO's statutory mission.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- May be submitted by a single LAFCO or as a collaborative effort among multiple entities.
- Must have been completed or reached a significant milestone during the qualifying period.
- Clearly defines the issue or need addressed by the project.
- Describes the approach, steps taken, and resources involved.
- Demonstrates measurable and verifiable results.
- Advances LAFCO responsibilities and objectives in a meaningful way.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Effectiveness and quality of execution.
- Significance and sustainability of outcomes.
- Value as a model or best practice for other LAFCOs.
- Overall impact on the community or communities served.

GOVERNMENT, COMMUNITY, OR PUBLIC PARTNER AWARD

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes a public agency, community association, stakeholder group, nonprofit, or other entity that has worked effectively with a LAFCO and contributed to a successful outcome. This award acknowledges that strong LAFCO work often depends on genuine partnerships beyond the Commission itself.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- Nominee must not be a LAFCO.

- Must have worked collaboratively with a LAFCO during the qualifying period.
- Demonstrates a constructive, solution-oriented approach to the partnership.
- Made a clear and demonstrable contribution to a LAFCO process or outcome.
- Demonstrates clear and tangible results from the partnership or engagement.
- May include cities, counties, special districts, associations, chambers of commerce, nonprofits, or other stakeholder groups.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Strength, quality, and depth of the partnership or engagement.
- Impact on governance, service delivery, or community outcomes.
- Value as a model for collaborative LAFCO engagement.

EQUITY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

AWARD SUMMARY:

Recognizes efforts that improve access to services, address identified service gaps, or advance equitable outcomes through LAFCO-related work. This award reflects CALAFCO's commitment to ensuring that LAFCO's mission serves all communities, particularly those that have historically faced barriers to adequate services.

NOMINATION CRITERIA:

- May be a LAFCO, individual, collaborative effort, or other entity as appropriate.
- The work must have occurred during the qualifying period.
- Clearly identifies a service need, gap, or equity concern.
- Describes the specific actions taken to address the identified need.
- Demonstrates measurable or clearly defined outcomes.
- Aligns with LAFCO responsibilities and statutory mission.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

- Must meet all nomination criteria for consideration.
- Level and breadth of community impact.
- Effectiveness and appropriateness of the approach taken.
- Sustainability and durability of results.
- Clarity and verifiability of outcomes.

PRESIDENT'S AWARD (DISCRETIONARY)

AWARD SUMMARY:

The President's Award is a discretionary award that allows CALAFCO to recognize an exceptional effort, contribution, achievement, or individual who does not fit neatly within the existing award categories. This award exists to ensure that truly remarkable accomplishments are not overlooked simply because they fall outside predefined boundaries. The award is discretionary and is not expected to be presented annually. Its use should reflect a genuine exception rather than routine recognition.

CRITERIA:

- May be awarded to an individual, organization, collaborative effort, or other nominee determined appropriate by the Board Chair.
- The contribution, achievement, or effort must be clearly exceptional in nature.
- The nominee should represent circumstances, accomplishments, or contributions that are not adequately recognized through an existing CALAFCO award category.
- Any Board member may submit a nomination to the Board Chair for consideration.

SELECTION:

- The Board Chair, in consultation with the Executive Director, determines whether to advance a nomination to the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee shall ratify the recipient by a supermajority vote.
- The recommendation presented to the Executive Committee shall include a clear explanation of why the nominee does not fit within an existing award category and why the recognition merits special consideration.

Note on the President's Award

Because this award is discretionary, a standard nomination form is not required. However, any nomination or recommendation for this award should include a written explanation of the exceptional contribution and a clear statement of why it falls outside existing categories.

QUALIFYING PERIOD

Except for the Lifetime Achievement Award, all nominated projects or acts of service must have occurred or been completed between August 16, 2025, and August 15, 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. 2026 Achievement Awards Nomination Form
- B. Listing of Prior Achievement Award Recipients

2026 CALAFCO ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Nomination Form

DEADLINE: Friday, August 28, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

Qualifying Period: August 16, 2025 through August 15, 2026

Submit all materials as a single PDF to: mmcintyre@calafco.org

Step 1: Select Award Category

Select the award category for this nomination (one category per form):

EXISTING CATEGORIES:

- ☐ Outstanding CALAFCO Volunteer
- ☐ Outstanding CALAFCO Associate Member
- ☐ Outstanding Commissioner
- ☐ Outstanding LAFCO Professional
- ☐ Lifetime Achievement Award
- ☐ Legislator of the Year
- ☐ Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Agricultural / Open Space Protection
- ☐ Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Innovation, Collaboration & Outreach

NEW CATEGORIES 2026:

- ☐ Emerging Leader – Commissioner ► NEW
- ☐ Emerging Leader – Staff ► NEW
- ☐ Project or Initiative of the Year ► NEW
- ☐ Government, Community, or Public Partner Award ► NEW
- ☐ Equity and Community Impact Award ► NEW
- ☐ President's Award (Discretionary) – Board recommendation/super majority vote required ► NEW

With the exception of the Lifetime Achievement Award, all nominated projects or acts of service must have occurred or been completed between August 16, 2025, and August 15, 2026. The Awards Committee may, at its discretion, reassign a nomination to a more appropriate category if warranted.

Step 2: Nominee Information

Name of Nominee:

Title (if applicable):

Organization / LAFCO:

Mailing Address:

City, State, ZIP:

Phone:

Email:

Step 3: Nominator Information

Name of Nominator:

Title / Organization:

Phone:

Email:

Step 4: Executive Summary (Required – 250 words maximum)

Provide a concise overview of the nomination. This summary should capture the most important reasons this nominee deserves recognition.

Step 5: Nomination Summary (Required – 1,000 words or 2 pages maximum)

Provide a full description of the nominee's contributions. Address each of the following elements:

- The issue, need, or context that prompted or shaped the nominee's contributions
- The specific actions taken
- Results or outcomes achieved
- Overall impact on the community, agency, or LAFCO mission
- How this nomination aligns with the specific award criteria

(Attach additional pages as needed, up to the two-page maximum, clearly labeled with the nominee's name and award category)

Step 6: Supporting Documentation (Optional)

Page Limits for Supporting Materials:

- Total supporting documentation (including letters): 3 pages maximum
- Optional letters of support or endorsement: maximum 2 letters, 1 page each
- Letters count toward the 3-page limit and must be submitted at time of initial submittal
- **Nominations exceeding these limits will not be considered**

Description of supporting documentation included with this nomination:

Step 7: CERTIFICATION AND SUBMITTAL

Certification:

By submitting this nomination, I confirm that:

- The information provided in this nomination is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- All required materials are included and meet the specified format and page limit requirements.
- This nomination is submitted as a complete, single PDF package.
- I understand that incomplete or late nominations will not be considered.

Nominator Signature:

Printed Name:

Title / Organization:

Date Submitted:

Submittal Instructions:

- Submit one complete nomination packet per nominee.
- Combine all materials (form, executive summary, nomination summary, supporting documents) into a single PDF.
- Nominations must be received by **Friday, August 28, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.** No late nominations accepted.
- Submit to: Michelle McIntyre, CALAFCO Executive Director | mmcintyre@calafco.org
(916) 442-6536

Selection Process:

Following the nomination deadline, all eligible nominations will be reviewed by the CALAFCO Achievement Awards Committee in accordance with the published award criteria and Association policies. The Committee may, at its discretion, reassign a nomination to a more appropriate award category, recognize more than one recipient in a category, or determine that no award will be presented in a category. To preserve the tradition of the CALAFCO Achievement Awards, award recipients are generally not notified in advance and are announced during the Achievement Awards presentation at the CALAFCO Annual Conference.

Thank you for taking the time to recognize the outstanding individuals, projects, and organizations that strengthen California's LAFCO community. Your nominations help CALAFCO celebrate excellence, innovation, leadership, and service throughout the state.



PREVIOUS CALAFCO ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS

2025

Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Kai Luoma, Ventura LAFCO
Associate Member of the Year	Best Best & Krieger LLP
Outstanding LAFCO Commissioner	Anthony Tyrrell, Calaveras LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Volunteer	José C. Henríquez, Sacramento LAFCO
Mike Gotch Award - <i>Innovation, Collaboration, Outreach, and Effective Support of Local Agency Evolution</i>	Placer LAFCO
Lifetime Achievement Award	SR Jones, Nevada LAFCO

2024

Legislator of the Year Award:	Senator Dave Cortese
Lifetime Achievement Award:	Stephen Lucas, Butte LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner:	Bill Connelly, Butte LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	J.D. Hightower, San Joaquin LAFCO
Mike Gotch Award - Agriculture Innovation	Monterey LAFCO Two-Way Tie: Santa Cruz LAFCO Riverside LAFCO & Imperial LAFCO

2023

Lifetime Achievement Award:	Dawn Mittleman Longoria, Napa LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Richard Bettencourt, San Benito LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Two-Way Tie: José C. Henríquez, Sacramento LAFCO Andrea Ozdy, Ventura LAFCO
Outstanding Associate Member	Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley
Outstanding Volunteer	Anita Paque, Calaveras LAFCO
Mike Gotch Award - Agriculture Innovation	Napa LAFCO Tom Cooley, Plumas LAFCO

2022

Outstanding Commissioner	Don Saylor, Yolo LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Carolyn Emery, Orange LAFCO
Mike Gotch Award - Innovation, Collaboration, And Outreach	Two-Way Tie: Cristine Crawford, Yolo LAFCO, and Erica Sanchez, El Dorado LAFCO & Amanda Ross, South Fork Consulting, LLC

ATTACHMENT B

2020 – 2021 (2 year period due to the pandemic)

Outstanding Associate Member	Planwest Partners
Outstanding Commissioner	Olin Woods, Yolo LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Crystal Craig, Riverside LAFCO
Mike Gotch Protection of Ag and Open Space Lands & Prevention of Urban Sprawl	Napa LAFCO
Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in Local Government Leadership Award	Yolo LAFCO
Lifetime Achievement Award	Jerry Glabach, Los Angeles LAFCO

2019

Distinguished Service Award	Charley Wilson, Orange LAFCO
Most Effective Commission	Contra Costa LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Jim DeMartini, Stanislaus LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	David Church, San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Project of the Year	Orange LAFCO, <i>for San Juan Capistrano Utilities MSR</i>
Government Leadership Award	CA State Water Resources Control Board, Los Angeles County and Los Angeles LAFCo, <i>for Sativa Water District</i> Butte LAFCO
Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in Local Government Leadership Award	
Legislator of the Year	Assembly Member Mike Gipson
Lifetime Achievement Award	John Benoit, various LAFCOs, Jurg Heuberger, Imperial LAFCO

2018

Distinguished Service Award	John Withers, Orange LAFCO
Most Effective Commission	Santa Clara LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Margie Mohler, Napa LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	George Williamson, Del Norte LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Elizabeth Valdez, Riverside LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Associate Member	Best Best & Krieger
Project of the Year	Lake LAFCo, water services consolidation
Government Leadership Award	City of Porterville, County of Tulare, Dept. of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Self Help Enterprises, Community Water Center for East Porterville water supply project
Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in Local Government Leadership Award	Mike Ott, San Diego LAFCO
Legislator of the Year	Assembly Member Anna Caballero
Lifetime Achievement Award	Pat McCormick, Santa Cruz LAFCO, George Spiliotis, Riverside LAFCO

2017

Most Effective Commission	Los Angeles LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Sblend Sblendorio, Alameda LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	John Marchand, Alameda LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Paul Novak, Los Angeles LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Richelle Beltran, Ventura LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Associate Member	Policy Consulting Associates
Project of the Year	County Services MSR, Butte LAFCO, and Santa Rosa Annexation, Sonoma LAFCO
Government Leadership Award	San Luis Obispo County Public Works Dept.
Lifetime Achievement Award	Kathy Rollings McDonald (San Bernardino)

2016

Distinguished Service Award	Peter Brundage, Sacramento LAFCO
Most Effective Commission	San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Member	John Leopold, Santa Cruz LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Don Tatzin, Contra Costa LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Steve Lucas, Butte LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Cheryl Carter-Benjamin, Orange LAFCO
Project of the Year	Countywide Water Study, (Marin LAFCO)
Government Leadership Award	Southern Region of CALAFCO
Lifetime Achievement Award	Bob Braitman (retired Executive Officer)

2015

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in Local Government Leadership Award	Yuba County Water Agency
Distinguished Service Award	Mary Jane Griego, Yuba LAFCO
Most Effective Commission	Butte LAFCO
Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Marjorie Blom, formerly of Stanislaus LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Matthew Beekman, formerly of Stanislaus LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Sam Martinez, San Bernardino LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Terri Tuck, Yolo LAFCO
Project of the Year	Formation of the Ventura County Waterworks District No. 38 (Ventura LAFCO) and 2015 San Diego County Health Care Services five-year sphere of influence and service review report (San Diego LAFCO)
Government Leadership Award	The Cities of Dublin, Pleasanton, Livermore and San Ramon, the Dublin San Ramon Services District and the Zone 7 Water Agency
CALAFCO Associate Member of the Year	Michael Colantuono of Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley
Legislators of the Year Award	Assembly member Chad Mayes
Lifetime Achievement Award	Jim Chapman (Lassen LAFCO) and Chris Tooker (formerly of Sacramento LAFCO)

2014

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award
Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member
Outstanding Commissioner
Outstanding LAFCO Professional
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year

Government Leadership Award

Legislators of the Year Award

Lifetime Achievement Award

David Church, San Luis Obispo LAFCO

Kate McKenna, Monterey LAFCO

Santa Clara LAFCO

Stephen Lucas, Butte LAFCO

Paul Norsell, Nevada LAFCO

Kate McKenna, Monterey LAFCO

Paige Hensley, Yuba LAFCO

LAFCO Procedures Guide: 50th Year Special Edition,
San Diego LAFCO

Orange County Water District, City of Anaheim, Irvine Ranch
Water District, and Yorba Linda Water District

Assembly member Katcho Achadjian

Susan Wilson, Orange LAFCO

2013

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award
Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member
Outstanding Commissioner
Outstanding LAFCO Professional
LAFCO Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year
Government Leadership Award

Legislators of the Year Award

Lifetime Achievement Award

Simón Salinas, Commissioner, Monterey LAFCO

Roseanne Chamberlain, Amador LAFCO

Stanislaus LAFCO

Harry Ehrlich, San Diego LAFCO

Jerry Gladbach, Los Angeles LAFCO

Lou Ann Texeira, Contra Costa

Kate Sibley, Contra Costa LAFCO

Plan for Agricultural Preservation, Stanislaus LAFCO

Orange County LAFCO Community Islands Taskforce,
Orange LAFCO

Senators Bill Emmerson and Richard Roth

H. Peter Faye, Yolo LAFCO; Henry Pellissier, Los Angeles
LAFCO; Carl Leverenz, Butte LAFCO; Susan Vicklund-Wilson,
Santa Clara LAFCO.

2012

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award
Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member

Outstanding Commissioner
LAFCO Outstanding LAFCO Professional
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year

Government Leadership Award

Lifetime Achievement Award

Bill Chiat, CALAFCO Executive Director

Marty McClelland, Commissioner, Humboldt LAFCO
Sonoma LAFCO

Stephen A. Souza, Commissioner, Yolo LAFCO and
CALAFCO Board of Directors

Sherwood Darington, Monterey

Carole Cooper, Sonoma LAFCO

Gwenna MacDonald, Lassen LAFCO

Countywide Service Review & SOI Update, Santa Clara
LAFCO

North Orange County Coalition of Cities, Orange LAFCO

P. Scott Browne, Legal Counsel LAFCOs

2011

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award
LAFCo Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member
Outstanding Commissioner
Outstanding LAFCO Professional
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year

Government Leadership Award

Martin Tuttle, Deputy Director for Planning, Caltrans
Mike McKeever, Executive Director, SACOG
Carl Leverenz, Commissioner and Chair, Butte
San Bernardino LAFCO
Keene Simonds, Executive Officer, Napa LAFCO
Louis R. Calcagno, Monterey LAFCO
June Savala, Deputy Executive Officer, Los Angeles LAFCO
Debbie Shubert, Ventura LAFCO
Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Definitions Revision
Bob Braitman, Scott Browne, Clark Alsop, Carole Cooper,
and George Spiliotis
Contra Costa Sanitary District
Elsinore Water District and Elsinore Valley Municipal Water
District

2010

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award

Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member
Outstanding Commissioner
Outstanding LAFCO Professional
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year

Government Leadership Award

Special Achievement

Helen Thompson, Commissioner, Yolo LAFCO

Kathleen Rollings-McDonald, Executive Officer, San
Bernardino LAFCO
Bob Braitman, Executive Officer, Santa Barbara LAFCO
Tulare LAFCO
Roger Anderson, Ph.D., CALAFCO Chair, Santa Cruz LAFCO
George Lange, Ventura LAFCO
Harry Ehrlich, Government Consultant, San Diego LAFCO
Candie Fleming, Fresno LAFCO

Butte LAFCO
Sewer Commission - Oroville Region Municipal Service
Review
Nipomo Community Services District and the County of San
Luis Obispo
Chris Tooker, Sacramento LAFCO and CALAFCO Board of
Directors

2009

Mike Gotch Courage & Innovation in
Local Government Leadership Award
Distinguished Service Award
Most Effective Commission
Outstanding CALAFCO Member

Outstanding Commissioner
Outstanding LAFCO Professional
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk
Project of the Year
Government Leadership Award

Legislator of the Year Award

Paul Hood, Executive Officer, San Luis Obispo LAFCO

William Zumwalt, Executive Officer, Kings LAFCO
Napa LAFCO
Susan Vicklund Wilson, CALAFCO Vice Chair
Jerry Gladbach, CALAFCO Treasurer
Larry M. Fortune, Fresno LAFCO
Pat McCormick, Santa Cruz LAFCO Executive Officer
Emmanuel Abello, Santa Clara LAFCO
Orange LAFCO Boundary Report
Cities of Amador City, Jackson, Lone, Plymouth & Sutter
Creek; Amador County; Amador Water Agency; Pine
Grove CSD – Countywide MSR Project
Assembly Member Jim Silva

2008

Distinguished Service Award	Peter M. Detwiler, Senate Local Government Committee Chief Consultant
Most Effective Commission	Yuba LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Dennis Hansberger, San Bernardino LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Michael Ott, San Diego LAFCO Executive Officer Martha Poyatos, San Mateo Executive Officer
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Wilda Turner, Los Angeles LAFCO
Project of the Year	Kings LAFCO City and Community District MSR and SOI Update
Government Leadership Award	San Bernardino Board of Supervisors
Legislator of the Year Award	Assembly Member Anna M. Caballero

2007

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Kathy Long, Board Chair, Ventura LAFCO
Distinguished Service Award	William D. Smith, San Diego Legal
Counsel Most Effective Commission	Santa Clara LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Gayle Uilkema, Contra Costa LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional	Joyce Crosthwaite, Orange LAFCO Executive Officer
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk	Debby Chamberlin, San Bernardino LAFCO
Project of the Year	San Bernardino LAFCO and City of Fontana Islands Annexation Program
Government Leadership Award	City of Fontana - Islands Annexation Program
Lifetime Achievement	John T. "Jack" Knox

2006

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Everett Millais, CALAFCO Executive Officer and Executive Officer of Ventura LAFCO
Distinguished Service Award	Clark Alsop, CALAFCO Legal Counsel
Most Effective Commission Award	Alameda LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner Award	Ted Grandsen, Ventura LAFCO Chris Tooker, Sacramento LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Larry Calemine, Los Angeles LAFCO Executive Officer
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Janice Bryson, San Diego LAFCO Marilyn Flemmer, Sacramento LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	Sacramento Municipal Utility District Sphere of Influence Amendment and Annexation; Sacramento LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Cities of Porterville, Tulare, and Visalia and Tulare LAFCO Island Annexation Program
Legislator of the Year Award	Senator Christine Kehoe

2005

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Peter Herzog, CALAFCO Board, Orange LAFCO
Distinguished Service Award	Elizabeth Castro Kemper, Yolo LAFCO
Most Effective Commission Award	Ventura LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner Award	Art Aseltine, Yuba LAFCO
	Henri Pellissier, Los Angeles LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Bruce Baracco, San Joaquin LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Danielle Ball, Orange LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	San Diego LAFCO
	MSR of Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)

2004

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Scott Harvey, CALAFCO Executive Director
Distinguished Service Award	Julie Howard, Shasta LAFCO
Most Effective Commission Award	San Diego LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner Award	Edith Johnsen, Monterey LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	David Kindig, Santa Cruz LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	San Luis Obispo LAFCO
	Nipomo CSD SOI Update, MSR, and EIR

2003

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Michael P. Ryan, CALAFCO Board Member
Distinguished Service Award	Henri F. Pellissier, Los Angeles LAFCO
Most Effective Commission Award	San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner Award	Bob Salazar, El Dorado LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Shirley Anderson, San Diego LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Lori Fleck, Siskiyou LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	Napa LAFCo
	Comprehensive Water Service Study
Special Achievement Award	James M. Roddy

2002

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Ken Lee, CALAFCO Legislative Committee Chair
Most Effective Commission Award	San Diego LAFCO Outstanding
Commissioner Award	Ed Snively, Imperial LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Paul Hood, San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Danielle Ball, Orange LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Napa LAFCo, Napa County Farm Bureau, Napa Valley Vintners Association, Napa Valley Housing Authority, Napa County Agricultural Commissioner's Office, Napa County Counsel Office, and Assembly Member Patricia Wiggins

2001

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	SR Jones, CALAFCO Executive Officer
Distinguished Service Award	David Martin, Tax Area Services Section, State Board of Equalization
Outstanding Commissioner Award	H. Peter Faye, Yolo LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Ingrid Hansen, San Diego LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	Santa Barbara LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Alameda County Board of Supervisors, Livermore City Council, Pleasanton City Council
Legislator of the Year Award	Senator Jack O'Connell

2000

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Ron Wootton, CALAFCO Board Chair
Distinguished Service Award	Ben Williams, Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century
Most Effective Commission Award	Yolo LAFCO
Outstanding Commissioner	Rich Gordon, San Mateo LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Professional Award	Annamaria Perrella, Contra Costa LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Susan Stahmann, El Dorado LAFCO
Project of the Year Award	San Diego LAFCO
Legislator of the Year Award	Robert Hertzberg, Assembly Member

1999

Distinguished Service Award	Marilyn Ann Flemmer-Rodgers, Sacramento LAFCO
Most Effective Commission Award	Orange LAFCO
Outstanding Executive Officer Award	Don Graff, Alameda LAFCO
Outstanding LAFCO Clerk Award	Dory Adams, Marin LAFCO
Most Creative Solution to a Multi-Jurisdictional Problem	San Diego LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Assembly Member John Longville
Legislator of the Year Award	Assembly Member Robert Hertzberg

1998

Outstanding CALAFCO Member	Dana Smith, Orange LAFCO
Distinguished Service Award	Marvin Panter, Fresno LAFCO
Most Effective Commission Award	San Diego LAFCO
Outstanding Executive Officer Award	George Spiliotis, Riverside LAFCO
Outstanding Staff Analysis	Joe Convery, San Diego LAFCO
	Joyce Crosthwaite, Orange LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	Santa Clara County Planning Department

1997

Most Effective Commission Award	Orange LAFCO
Outstanding Executive Officer Award	George Finney, Tulare LAFCO
Outstanding Staff Analysis	Annamaria Perrella, Contra Costa LAFCO
Outstanding Government Leadership Award	South County Issues Discussion Group
Most Creative Solution to a Multi-Jurisdictional Problem	Alameda LAFCO and Contra Costa LAFCO
Legislator of the Year Award	Assembly Member Tom Torlakson

2026 CALAFCO ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Nomination Form

DEADLINE: Friday, August 28, 2026, by 5:00 p.m.

Qualifying Period: August 16, 2025 through August 15, 2026

Submit all materials as a single PDF to: mmcintyre@calafco.org

Step 1: Select Award Category

Select the award category for this nomination (one category per form):

EXISTING CATEGORIES:

- ☐ Outstanding CALAFCO Volunteer
- ☐ Outstanding CALAFCO Associate Member
- ☐ Outstanding Commissioner
- ☐ Outstanding LAFCO Professional
- ☐ Lifetime Achievement Award
- ☐ Legislator of the Year
- ☐ Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Agricultural / Open Space Protection
- ☒ Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Innovation, Collaboration & Outreach

NEW CATEGORIES 2026:

- ☐ Emerging Leader – Commissioner ► NEW
- ☐ Emerging Leader – Staff ► NEW
- ☐ Project or Initiative of the Year ► NEW
- ☐ Government, Community, or Public Partner Award ► NEW
- ☐ Equity and Community Impact Award ► NEW
- ☐ President's Award (Discretionary) – Board recommendation/super majority vote required ► NEW

With the exception of the Lifetime Achievement Award, all nominated projects or acts of service must have occurred or been completed between August 16, 2025, and August 15, 2026. The Awards Committee may, at its discretion, reassign a nomination to a more appropriate category if warranted.

Step 2: Nominee Information

Name of Nominee:	Santa Barbara LAFCO
Title (if applicable):	
Organization / LAFCO:	Santa Barbara LAFCO
Mailing Address:	105 E. Anapamu St.
City, State, ZIP:	Santa Barbara, CA 93101
Phone:	(805) 568-3391
Email:	lafo@sblafco.org

Step 3: Nominator Information

Name of Nominator: Mike Prater

Title / Organization: Executive Officer, Santa Barbara LAFCO

Phone: 805-568-3391

Email: lafco@sblafco.org

Step 4: Executive Summary (Required – 250 words maximum)

Provide a concise overview of the nomination. This summary should capture the most important reasons this nominee deserves recognition.

Municipal Service Reviews are legally required evaluations of how cities and special districts provide services and municipal functions. Traditionally, since the mid 2000s, Municipal Service Review Reports (MSRs) were usually only requested when an agency desired a change to their Sphere of Influence (SOI). This led to status quo SOIs being adopted as agencies typically responded with not needing any changes. In 2021, the Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) embarked on a multi-year MSR/SOI Program in order to enhance service reviews for each agency County-wide.

Over the past 5 years, Santa Barbara LAFCO has transformed its service review process framework by creating categories to evaluate common services by resource type, rather than single agency. This evolution of the program has helped to better understand key factors such as operations, agency impact, and collaborations. This approach has also provided an actionable planning document that allows for the ability to identify service gaps, infrastructure needs, and opportunities for collaboration, while at the same time ensuring that County residents are receiving the most effective and efficient services. The MSR/SOI Program is a collaborative effort that involves the participation of each agency in the development of the review and in identifying Study Areas. The process includes public outreach and participation through the utilization of on-line community surveys throughout the process. Santa Barbara LAFCO had the foresight and determination to undertake this innovative approach in order to conduct service reviews for all agencies providing services every five years while also meeting legislative requirements.

Step 5: Nomination Summary (Required – 1,000 words or 2 pages maximum)

Provide a full description of the nominee's contributions. Address each of the following elements:

- The issue, need, or context that prompted or shaped the nominee's contributions
- The specific actions taken
- Results or outcomes achieved
- Overall impact on the community, agency, or LAFCO mission
- How this nomination aligns with the specific award criteria

(Attach additional pages as needed, up to the two-page maximum, clearly labeled with the nominee's name and award category)

Step 6: Supporting Documentation (Optional)

Page Limits for Supporting Materials:

- Total supporting documentation (including letters): 3 pages maximum
- Optional letters of support or endorsement: maximum 2 letters, 1 page each
- Letters count toward the 3-page limit and must be submitted at time of initial submittal
- **Nominations exceeding these limits will not be considered**

Description of supporting documentation included with this nomination:

Step 7: CERTIFICATION AND SUBMITTAL

Certification:

By submitting this nomination, I confirm that:

- The information provided in this nomination is accurate to the best of my knowledge.
- All required materials are included and meet the specified format and page limit requirements.
- This nomination is submitted as a complete, single PDF package.
- I understand that incomplete or late nominations will not be considered.

Nominator Signature:



Printed Name: Mike Prater

Title / Organization: Santa Barbara LAFCO

Date Submitted: 8-7-26

Santa Barbara LAFCO – Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Innovation, Collaboration & Outreach

Municipal Service Reviews (MSRs) are mandated by California state law under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act. Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCO's) are tasked with compiling reports to provide the factual and analytical foundation required in order to periodically review and update the services and Sphere of Influence (SOI) for all cities and special districts. A municipal service review (MSR) typically takes anywhere from 6 to 12 months to complete, though the exact timeframe can depend heavily on staffing as well as the study's complexity and data availability. Santa Barbara County contains (8) cities and (54) special districts. Conducting individual service reviews for this vast number of agencies would mean that a long period of time would go by before an agency would be re-evaluated again.

In 2020 Santa Barbara LAFCO, under leadership of its new Executive Officer Mike Prater, decided to embark on revamping its Municipal Service Review Program. Rather than performing reviews on a single agency each year, Executive Officer Prater felt that a multi-agency approach would be a better strategy, allowing staff to comprehensively evaluate multiple cities and special districts within a given year to complete service reviews in accordance with state law. Executive Officer Prater, with approval by the Commission, created a 5-year MSR work program of categories in which to evaluate all cities and special districts within the County. The categories selected are:

1. Fire, Law Enforcement, Safety & Crime Services
2. Water, Wastewater, & Stormwater Services
3. Transportation, Parking, Lighting, Transit & Airport Services
4. Parks, Open Space, Library & Facility Rental Services
5. Healthcare, Vector, and Cemetery Services

This method ensures that within a (5) year period, an agency will be evaluated multiple times, and can have its Sphere of Influence reviewed and updated in a more timely and efficient process. All eight cities are evaluated annually with a focus on the selected service theme for that year, and they have the ability to update and discuss the latest concerns or opportunities that they may face. This allows the Commission, public, and agencies to focus on relevant and current matters. Any changes or governance issues that arise can be raised and addressed in a timely manner, rather than waiting for the next MSR cycle.

Executive Officer Prater also incorporated the use of a Municipal Service Review Survey and draft review process within the timeline of drafting each report. The surveys are sent out to all agencies that are to be evaluated each year for the given category of service that

Santa Barbara LAFCO – Mike Gotch Excellence in Public Service Award – Innovation, Collaboration & Outreach

is being reviewed. Each agency is asked to complete the survey and provide any reports, financial documents, or additional information that may be useful to Santa Barbara LAFCO while conducting its review. After a draft has been completed by staff it is returned to the agency for review and to provide any additional information, comments, or revisions that they may request. This inter-agency approach has also allowed for Santa Barbara LAFCO to foster a collaborative and working relationship with the representatives from each agency. Full input and knowledge are disclosed before final adoption, keeping the agencies involved and engaged.

The (5) Municipal Service Reviews that Santa Barbara LAFCO has completed between 2020-2025 under its 5-Year Work Program has provided the public with a better understanding of how Santa Barbara LAFCO makes informed boundary decisions, ensures accountability and transparency, evaluates service adequacy and identifies efficiencies from the agencies that are being evaluated. Some of the successful outcomes include; clean-up of service boundaries, expansion of SOIs, dissolution of inactive districts, consolidation recommendations of water and sewer districts, future activation of powers, recognition of many smaller districts that are performing quality level of services that did not previously receive praise, agencies to adopt audits on time, improve websites and work collaboratively with neighboring agencies. Other achievements include discussion and recommendations related to lesser high-profile services like Broadband, library, undergrounding of utilities, safe evacuation routes, climate resiliency, groundwater and recycled water planning, and environmental justice. The collaboration of updating service reviews and adopting spheres of influence lead Santa Barbara LAFCO to take a lead role in being awarded a \$500K Sustainable Agricultural Lands Conservation Program Planning Grant working with agencies and stakeholder partners to study strategies to protect critical agricultural lands while addressing the regional housing needs. The Santa Barbara County Agriculture and Natural Resource Initiative will produce a model framework for addressing urban development while conserving agricultural lands and resources using comprehensive spatial and policy analysis, combined with robust community engagement.