



March 4, 2024

“CONSTRUCTING A WAY FOR A BETTER FUTURE”

# ECA NEWSLETTER

## JOHNS SOAPBOX



Remember-this is an op-ed piece and I do not speak for the ECA or any of its members in this “Soapbox”. These are just my rambblings that hopefully you find thought provoking. Remember-these are my opinions, not those of the ECA or any of its member firms.



### Have We Found a Workaround to the California Environmental Quality Act?

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) has often been used, or mis-used, to block housing construction and other projects.

California’s perpetual conflict over housing, pitting advocates of state-level pro-development policies against defenders of local government land use authority, has often involved [friction between two state laws](#).

One, the [Housing Accountability Act](#), or HAA, aims to remove barriers to construction, while the older [California Environmental Quality Act](#) has been employed to delay or block specific projects.

One tactic used by local authorities to overcome the accountability law’s pro-housing provisions has been indefinitely delaying decisions on whether projects are eligible for CEQA clearance by demanding ever-more data from developers.

Last year, the Legislature, which has been strengthening HAA provisions in recent years, cracked down on CEQA delays by passing [Assembly Bill 1633](#), carried by Assemblyman [Phil Ting](#), a Democrat from San Francisco, where the tactic has often been employed. It decreed that excessive CEQA delays in high-density urban projects violate state law and subject officials to lawsuits.

While AB 1633 gives pro-housing advocates a new legal weapon, its applicability to only specific kinds of projects falls short of a wider overhaul of CEQA that some political figures have supported.

For instance, former Gov. Jerry Brown once described CEQA reform as “the Lord’s work,” but was unwilling to take on the heavy political burden such changes would require. If politicians are unwilling to take on CEQA reform – which would draw opposition from environmental groups, and labor unions which invoke the law to demand agreements with developers – so maybe AB1633 can avoid the major reform CEQA needs by allowing the courts to knock down the power of CEQA challenges.

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This month, a [state appellate court delivered a ruling](#) that, if not overturned by the state Supreme Court, would make it much more difficult to use CEQA to stop projects that conform to local zoning laws.

A three-judge panel on the 4th District Court of Appeal unanimously declared that the county could not impose additional conditions because the project was compatible with the industrial zone the county created in its general plan. Basically, this means that if a project is designed and proposed in a certain zoning area, opponents cannot rely on CEQA to impose draconian additional measures and delays to the project. If this recent court case stands in this northern San Diego Hilltop project, CEQA would be “defanged” in many projects into the future.

It remains to be seen, but if the recent decision is not challenged, it can be a real “game changer” for housing and other projects to move forward without special interest pressure tactics that use CEQA as their primary delay tactic.

This article was from CalMatters and Dan Walters and reworded slightly by me.

That’s All Folks,

John

**ECA Installation Dinner** on 2-24-24 is “in the books” and it was memorable. I want to thank our attendees, and our Premiere Sponsor Ghilotti Construction Company. We need sponsors to make our costs each year so not only are all of your sponsorships appreciated, but they are also crucial! The final numbers for income and expense are in, and I am happy to announce that the event hit our anticipated 2024 budget numbers. Thanks to Premiere Sponsor Ghilotti Construction Company and all of our attendees and sponsors!! Good start to our 2024!

**ECA Public Officials Night** on April 10, 2024, is our next ECA event. Because the City of Petaluma took over operation of Herzog Hall from the Fairgrounds, some rules have changed and made our venue have to change. The main reason was they will not allow liquor to be served and that would be a real PO Night Buzzkill! The new location will be The Backdrop in Santa Rosa on April 10.

## COMMITTEE NEWS

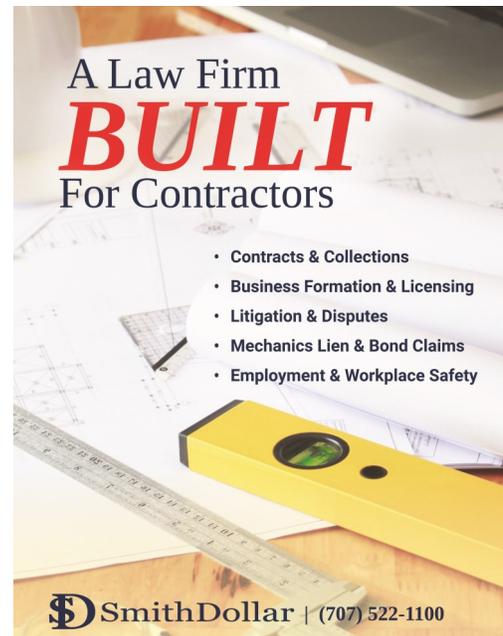
**ECA Executive Committee Meeting**-next meeting is on Tuesday March 26, at 11:00 am. The Exec Committee meets every 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month in 2024 at 11:00-12:00 in the small NCBE conference room. We will be discussing our political action committee policies as well as putting in place our new dues renewal policies. Basically, the dues renewals will go back to being for a full year starting Jan 1, 2025, and we will not be billing twice a year beginning in 2025. We appreciate and understand ECA members are business clients and the ECA hopes to provide return on investment in such a manner as ECA members will want to remain ECA members into the future!

- **ECA Board of Director Meeting**-next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, from 12:30 pm. The Board of Directors meets in the NCBE main board room.

**ECA Community Relations Committee**-Chaired by Lacey Torkelson Smith, meets when there is a specific project to consider. Our current plan is to present the Children's Museum project to be considered on April 23, 2024, by our full Board of Directors.

**ECA Specification Committee**-chaired by Casey Wood of GBI and Dale Smith of RCX. We will next meet on Monday, March 25 from 1-3pm in the conference room in the City Manager's office on the corner of Sonoma Avenue and Mendocino Avenue.

**ECA Government Affairs Committee**-chaired by Art Deicke of Environmental Pollution Solutions does not have a scheduled meeting upcoming. We have endorsed Chris Rogers for Jim Woods' State Assembly seat and hope Chris is successful.



## Save the Dates for 2024!!!

Public Officials Night— Wednesday, April 10,  
Father's Day "Show & Shine" Car Show—Sunday, June 16th, Juilliard Park  
ECA's Golf Tournament, Windsor Golf Club—July 12, 2024 \*NEW DATE\*  
Wine & Dozers Dinner and Auction—September 28, 2024, Graton Resort & Casino



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# Public Officials Night!

Wednesday, April 10

5:30pm - 9:00pm

No Host Cocktails 5:30 p.m. - Dinner 7 p.m.

Place

The Backdrop

1455 Corporate Center Parkway, Santa Rosa

THE  
BACKDROP



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Click [HERE](#) for the Sponsor flyer



## WORKER'S COMPENSATION

### Worker's Compensation Endorsement By ECA-

HELLO!!! HAVE YOU ASKED YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES PERSON TO CHECK OUT THE WORKERS COMP PROGRAM ECA HAS ENDORSED? Everybody likes to save money, don't they? Doesn't cost you a thing to consider this as an option! Jeff Okrepkie at 707-360-4338.



George Petersen Insurance Agency

## FIRE CLEAN UP LIST:

The Sonoma County Environmental Health Department, Transportation and Public Works, and James Gore's office are utilizing the ECA as a resource for debris testing, and debris cleanup for fire victims from the Kincade Fire. Please review the list that has been provided to the fire victims and the County, of ECA Firms that are interested and listed in various categories as being helpful in the fire aftermath. This is another benefit for ECA members and if you want to be included on the list, and are not, please contact [mary@nceda.org](mailto:mary@nceda.org). There is no charge for this. You can access the list by clicking [HERE](#)

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANUAL

The updated 2023-2024 Emergency Response Manual is now available online!

In the event of an emergency, we have put together this manual to help our community receive quick service from our members.

Thank you to our sponsors for helping to get this manual completed. It is sent to city and county agencies in case of an emergency so they will know who to call for services, equipment and materials.

Click [HERE](#) for the manual.

**Get Prepared Now! Here are some very useful tips from CalFire** to get your own house/property "in shape" for fire season. [link](#)

**Pocket Guide for CALOSHA** For Contractors: Click [here](#) for the pocket guide you all need!

**Roadwork in Sonoma County** - Check out the County website for road info [here](#)

## Labor Law Posters 2024

Click [HERE!](#)

### Cabrera & Associates

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## From the Desk of Jim Persons

### Pre-Work Stretching for Construction Workers

Pre-work stretching is an important part of any construction worker's safety routine. By taking a few minutes to stretch before starting a job, workers can help prevent injuries and stay healthy on the job.

Click [HERE](#) to read more.



### Workplace Violence Program

Implementation "Target Date" – July 1, 2024

Senate Bill 553 requires employers to create, implement and maintain a Workplace Violence Program by July 1, 2024. Employers must also train their entire workforce.

The Workplace Violence Program must include a reporting mechanism (how is the employee going to report incidents), detailing who will be responsible for receiving complaints, and who will be responsible for identifying and mitigating workplace hazards.

Jim Persons has developed a Workplace Violence Program and Active Shooter Guidelines that meet the requirements of this new regulation. He can also provide training resources for your employees.

Contact Jim if you are interested in getting his help on a Workplace Violence Program, COVID-19 related issues or other health and safety programs.

email: [jimpersons@safetypride.com](mailto:jimpersons@safetypride.com) or phone: 707-889-0881



### Fire Debris Cleanup Management Services

- County Application and Work Plan Preparation
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# SAFETY TRAINING

## Upcoming CPR/First Aid Classes

Training includes bleeding control, strokes, seizures, broken bones and other life-threatening emergencies. Adult/child/infant CPR & airway obstruction management covered. This course is designed as both a course for first-timers and as a refresher

9 am—11 am

March 19 - [Flyer](#)

May 21—[Flyer](#)

June 18—[Flyer](#)

1 pm—3 pm

April 16 - [Flyer](#)



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Part of this **on-demand service** is a viable alternative to **in-house training** because it is designed for situations where only **one, two, three or four** people that need training. Importantly, this training can be very cost effective. We can combine the classes with other companies that need the training or you can have your own company class.

Whether you're in search of workplace safety training to meet OSHA compliance requirements, Competent Person, Trench Safety, Confined Space, CPR/First Aid initial or update training or implementing a Safety Program ECA can help!

*The best way to beat an OSHA citation is to never get one at all.*

Email [mary@nceca.org](mailto:mary@nceca.org) to set up a class today If you don't see a class you need listed please contact me.

CPR / First Aid: 3 hrs - \$95 per person

Confined Space: 3 hrs - \$150 per person

Competent Person / Trench Safety: 3 hrs - \$125 per person

Flagger Safety Training: 2 hrs - \$125 per person

Sexual Harassment—1 hr for Employees—\$25 per person ~ 2 hrs for Supervisors \$35 per person



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## NEWS YOU CAN USE

1. Monday, 2-26-24, the Sonoma County Transportation Authority had its monthly Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, and “yours truly” was reappointed Chairperson for another year for the CAC. It is with great pride that I have the support of the Committee members as the makeup of this group includes those that support rebuilding roads, bridges, and bike paths, and those that do not want any public dollars to go to widening road or making them smoother. I am able to collaborate with all committee members respectfully and I am quite proud of that fact. This Advisory Committee oversees some \$35 million annually that helps fund public infrastructure, public transportation, and local street repair projects.
2. At the 2-26-24 SCTA CAC meeting, we heard from Janice Thompson on some upcoming Sonoma County infrastructure projects and here is Janice’s power point presentation for some upcoming projects around the County [Measure-M-SCTA-CAC-2 24.pdf](#)
3. New Solano County City-Bill Dodd strongly opposes this “new city”- [Sen. Dodd issues strong opposition to Solano County ‘megacity’ plan \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
4. With some controversy, the Healdsburg City Council selected the site of the Healdsburg SMART train station-here is where it is going to be built-[Healdsburg decides future SMART station location \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
5. The iconic Wohler Bridge is getting renovated for \$18 million-traffic will be disrupted for many months-[Wohler Road Bridge to undergo history-making \\$18 million seismic retrofit \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
6. Highway 37 April paving closures-[Highway 37 to close on April weekends for repairs ahead of major improvements \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
7. My friend Jake Mackenzie has been selected by Governor Newsom to be on the North Coast Regional Water Board-this is good news for all of us!- [Newsom appoints Rohnert Park’s Jake Mackenzie to North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board \(pressdemocrat.com\)](#)
8. No Recession in 2024-Economists Brighten their forecasts-[Why economists are brightening their outlooks on 2024 and what’s in store for the North Bay \(northbaybusinessjournal.com\)](#)
9. 40 Under 40 Award Winners-[Photos: North Bay Business Journal’s Forty Under 40 awards event at Sonoma County Fairgrounds](#)
10. Although the ECA did not take official endorsement positions on a lot of issues folks are voting on tomorrow, I thought it would be helpful to include a link to the North Bay Leadership Council’s political endorsements that may help you fill out your ballot- Click [HERE](#)





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