



Oak Canyon  
Nature Center in  
Anaheim Hills



Douglass  
Davert

## Message *from the* Chair

Welcome to the first edition of *The Pulse*, where you can read up on the recent activities of the Commission and staff!

Over the past two years, OCLAFCO has embarked on an effort to enhance the agency's communications resources and outreach to our local agencies and communities. In part to that effort, the Commission adopted and implemented its first Communication Plan and completed an overhaul and redesign of the agency's website. The Communication Plan is flushed with new tools that include key messaging and monthly updates that are presented by Commissioners

and staff to our local agencies, OC legislators, communities, and other interested parties. The OC LAFCO website is the premier gateway to the agency, and its fresh look houses a wealth of information on our latest projects and activities. Functioning as our main communication resource, [www.oclafco.org](http://www.oclafco.org) is where your agency may also gain access to key tools, such as the Shared Services and Fiscal Indicators Programs and the Municipal Services Dashboard.

So, take a read of *The Pulse* and learn more about what's on the horizon for OC LAFCO in the coming months.

We hope you enjoy it, and on behalf of the Commission and staff, we wish you and your agency a great start to a new year!


### FIRST EDITION



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A scenic landscape photograph showing a paved path winding through a field of yellow wildflowers. In the background, there are dense trees and a river flowing through a valley under a cloudy sky.

Sunset over  
Aliso Viejo  
Wilderness Park

# First-Half Accomplishments

The following is a look back at OC LAFCO's accomplishments through the end of 2021.



## Blast from the Annexation Past

In early 2000, the Commission approved the annexation of approximately 871 acres to the City of Brea. The area annexed, well-known throughout the County as “Tonner Hills,” included multiple developers and is now home to many Brea residents. Fast forward to 20 years later, a portion of the project area that includes an inactive oil field is awaiting final recordation, the last step in the OC LAFCO process. Future development within the area includes residential areas and welcomed open space. The Commission's ultimate action on this project is expected to occur mid-2022 when the area will officially become a part of Brea. The effort represents the leadership and success of the Commission in annexing unincorporated areas.

## Ensuring Efficient Delivery of Water and Wastewater Services

The annexation of the City of San Juan Capistrano's water and wastewater utilities to the Santa Margarita Water District represents a significant accomplishment of the Commission, District and City. After a deliberate Municipal Service Review process and thorough analysis of the District's Plan for Service, the Commission unanimously approved the annexation on August 19, 2021. In addition to representing OC LAFCO's collaboration with the affected agencies, the Commission's independent review of the District's application resulted in City residents experiencing the future stabilization of rates, improved infrastructure, and less reliance on imported water. Santa Margarita Water District welcomed the residents to the District's family at a ceremony this past November and officially assumed the provision of services to the City residents on November 10.

## The Tale of a Shared Boundary

For the past several years, the Cities of Anaheim and Orange have engaged in discussions regarding establishing a more logical shared boundary along the Santa Ana River. To move in that direction, during the first half of the current fiscal cycle, the Commission approved a reorganization application submitted by the City of Anaheim. The completed change in boundary involved the realignment of a small parking lot adjacent to the Angel Stadium. With this area now located within the City of Anaheim, it will function more efficiently in providing parking accommodations for a future project already located within Anaheim's jurisdictional boundary. More adjustments to this boundary straddling both cities and adjacent to this area are expected in early 2022.

# Second-Half – What’s on the Horizon for OC LAFCO?

Here’s what is expected on the OC LAFCO front during the second-half.

## Capistrano Bay Community Services District Seeks to Provide Flood Control Protection

Capistrano Bay CSD currently serves a coastal community of 5,824 acres located within the City of Dana Point. Home to 189 residents, the area over the past 25 years, much like other coastal communities across the state, has experienced the challenges of sea level rise and shoreline erosion. To proactively address these issues, this past May, the District filed an activation of latent powers application with OC LAFCO. In accordance with State law, Capistrano Bay CSD must receive approval from OC LAFCO to provide flood control protection, a service the District has not previously nor currently provides. The District is currently conducting further assessment of taking on this new service and meeting the statutory requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (“The Act”). The Act outlines specific requirements and procedures that agencies must meet to expand its governance to include a new service. A more detailed Plan for Service and assessment are expected from the District during the second half of the current fiscal cycle.

## Illogical Boundaries

The Orange County boundary includes 34 cities, formally incorporated over the past 100 years. During this time, and in some cases throughout the County, illogical boundaries occurred due to road realignment, development and topography.

Over the past two years, the Commission has seen an uptick in applications from landowners seeking to improve the boundary for their property. One application filed with OC LAFCO during the current fiscal year includes a landowner petition to realign a property that is currently split between the County of Orange and City of Tustin.



Marshlands at  
Huntington Beach

The landowner is seeking to improve the boundary through the application to OC LAFCO to place the entire property within the jurisdiction of the County. Preliminary analysis completed by staff suggest that detachment of the portion of the property from the City of Tustin may result in a more logical boundary and efficient delivery of municipal services to the property. With application requirements still pending, the proposed project is anticipated to be considered by the Commission in early 2022.

## Fourth Cycle MSR and Sphere Reviews

Since legislation was enacted by the State in 2000, OC LAFCO has proactively met the legislative mandate to prepare MSRs and concurrent spheres of influence reviews for each Orange County city and special district every five years. The Fourth MSR and SOI Cycle is expected to extend through 2024 and the current work plan includes the reviews of the County Service Areas 13, 22, and 26, Orange County Cemetery District and the Southeast and West MSR Regions.

You may visit the MSR webpage at [www.oclafco.org](http://www.oclafco.org) to see when your agency’s MSR is scheduled. Not to worry though, as OC LAFCO staff will reach out to your agency directly in advance of your MSR/SOI Review to discuss the process and timeline.

We look forward to working with our local agencies and communities as we prepare these studies to address the delivery of municipal services to current and future Orange County residents. You may also find previous MSR and SOI reports on our website for your agency.

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Vista Ridge Park in  
Newport Beach

#### ▶ WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR OC LAFCO'S SECOND HALF

## County Unincorporated Areas Remain a Priority

One of OC LAFCO's key priorities is facilitating annexation of the county unincorporated areas to adjacent cities. With 24 unincorporated areas remaining, during the first half of the work plan cycle, there was an increased interest from multiple cities in annexing the areas located within their sphere of influence. Preliminary discussions with the Cities of Anaheim, Fountain Valley, and Orange on the annexation process and potential outreach to the respective communities have ensued. While these conversations are at the beginning stage, OC LAFCO staff embraces the opportunity to discuss potential annexation of unincorporated areas with interested cities and residents.

Additionally, OC LAFCO staff has worked collaboratively through providing information and participating in community workshops with the City of Placentia and County staff to move annexation of the Hamer Island forward. The City has proactively engaged the residents of the small island and is expected to submit an application early 2022.

Interested in learning more about the unincorporated areas? Visit the OC LAFCO website at [www.oclafco.org](http://www.oclafco.org), click on "How Can We Help?" where you will find the unincorporated areas page. You may also contact staff directly at (714) 640-5100 to discuss.

## Legislative Affairs

The 2021-22 Legislative Session is just getting underway with the Legislature returning from recess this month. Last year, the Commission was active on this front with adopting positions on a total of eleven bills and monitoring several other areas of interest. The second part of the session, which is normally where most of the activity occurs, is expected to be busy with legislation of LAFCO interest. Also, OC LAFCO staff, as a participant of the CALAFCO Legislative Committee, has already begun monitoring the efforts of the annual Omnibus bill and the statewide association's other key priorities. To find out more about the Commission's legislative affairs and quarterly reports, contact [Luis Tapia](mailto:Luis.Tapia@oclafco.org) at (714) 640-5100.

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## OC LAFCO Executive Officer to Speak at the January 27 ISDOC Luncheon

On November 10, 2021, the Commission adopted the agency's 2021 **Strategic Plan**. With a refreshed mission statement and key strategic objectives, the Plan represents a comprehensive focus on ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of municipal services within cities, special districts, and the county. Hear from Carolyn Emery, OC LAFCO's Executive Officer, at the next ISDOC Quarterly Luncheon on January 27. She will share more information on the Strategic Plan and what's on the horizon for OC LAFCO.

Visit the Municipal Water District of Orange County at [www.mwdoc.com](http://www.mwdoc.com) to register for the luncheon. Interested parties may also access the 2021 OC LAFCO Strategic Plan at [www.oclafco.org](http://www.oclafco.org).

## Welcome all 58 LAFCOs to Orange County

After multiple postponements due to the pandemic, OC LAFCO, in partnership with CALAFCO and Imperial LAFCO, is pleased to be a co-host of the 2022 CALAFCO Staff Workshop. The workshop will take place at the Hyatt Regency John Wayne Airport, in the beautiful City of Newport Beach, March 23–25. At the workshop we will showcase the delivery of municipal services by our coastal cities and special

districts during the mobile workshop entitled, “It’s a Shore Thing: Navigating Municipal Service Delivery within Coastal Areas.” Although the pandemic still presents some uncertainties, it’s our hope to welcome attendees from CALAFCO’s four regions to the OC!

## Preserving The Past

Imagine documents transcribed on onion paper, or penned by hand and maps as large as a picture window! Well, you are bound to have all of these if you have been in existence for nearly 60 years.

OC LAFCO is pleased to step into the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the digitizing of the agency’s more current and historical documents. The Commission has implemented Laserfiche, a tool developed to assist agencies with the archival of documents within a structure that supports efficiency and secure storage of data. Whether you are a landowner interested in an annexation that occurred 25 years ago or agency staff researching the proceedings of your city’s incorporation, historical documents are now closer to our staff’s fingertips.


Interested parties may begin their research journey at the Resources page on the agency’s website where you can review our annexation reports dating back over 15 years.



# Message from OC LAFCO Executive Officer



I’ve had the pleasure to participate as a member of the OC LAFCO team for over 21 years and as the Executive Officer since 2013. During this time, we’ve processed city incorporations, countless boundary changes to our cities and special districts, and prepared several studies. Each of these processes have been exciting experiences for me, and I look forward to continuing to lead our staff and implement the policies of the Board, with the ultimate mission of “serving Orange County cities, special districts, and the county to ensure effective and efficient delivery of municipal services.”



You may contact OC LAFCO staff at (714) 640-5100 or visit our “Contact Us” page at [www.OCLAFCO.org](http://www.OCLAFCO.org).