The Quick List

An Annotated Glossary of Local Government Statutes

April 2006

Introduction to "The Quick List"

The earliest version of "The Quick List" appeared about 20 years ago when the Senate Local Government Committee's staff started jotting down statutory citations to answer questions from other staffers, lobbyists, and constituents.

"*Where do I look in state law to find the Brown Act?*" was a common question. Or, "*What's the cite for the redevelopment law?*" And the never-ending string of questions about LAFCOs. The Committee's staff got tired of looking up the same answers, so they wrote them down. And so "The Quick List" was born.

Over the years, a succession of wonderful Senate Fellows has added items, corrected mistakes, and cleaned-up "The Quick List." Candace Carpenter, the Committee's Senate Fellow in 2000-01, checked every cite and revised the entries.

Christina Wong is the Committee's 2005-06 Senate Fellow. Christina volunteered to convert "The Quick List" into an annotated glossary. Working from the 2001 version and with Peter Detwiler's advice, Christina used a variety of sources to produce this glossary. County Information, a resource binder produced by the Center for California Studies at California State University, Sacramento for the California State Association of Counties, was a big asset.

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Acronyms:

ALG	Assembly Local Government Committee
CDIAC	California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission
CNPA	California Newspaper Publishers Association
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
SLG	Senate Local Government Committee

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The Quick List: An Annotated Glossary of Local Government Statutes

AB 8 (property tax allocation)
Revenue & Taxation Code §95, et seq.
The state law that allocates property tax revenues to local governments and schools.
(*Resource:* Demystifying The California Property Tax Allocation System, Santa Clara County)
(*Resource*: Property Tax Allocation, SLG Committee)

Administrative Procedures Act (APA)
Government Code §11340, et seq.
The procedures for state departments to adopt their administrative regulations.

Advisory elections
Elections Code §9603
Local officials can put non-binding questions on local ballots.

Agricultural conservation easements
Public Resources Code §10260, et seq.
Landowners and local officials can voluntarily restrict land to agricultural uses.
(*Also see:* "conservation easements" and "open space easements")

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act
Public Resources Code §2621, et seq.
Local officials must adopt earthquake fault zoning, based on state maps.

ALUC (Airport Land Use Commission)
Public Utilities Code §21670, et seq.
Every county with a public use airport has an ALUC that must adopt binding land use plans.
(*Resource:* The Airport Land Use Planning Handbook, Caltrans Division of Aeronautics)

Anti-NIMBY law
Government Code §65589.5
Cities and counties must approve certain housing developments, even if neighbors object.

Appropriations limit (Gann limit, Proposition 4)
California Constitution Article XIIIB
Government Code §7900, et seq.
Public agencies can't spend more than they spent in the prior year, with adjustments.

Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Law
Government Code §11120, et seq.
The open meeting law for state agencies, similar to the Brown Act.
(*Resource:* A Handy Guide to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, Attorney General,
http://caag.state.ca.us/publications/index.htm#opengovernment)

Bankruptcy
Government Code §53760
Local governments can use the federal bankruptcy law.

BCDC (San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission)
Government Code §66600, et seq.
The state commission that plans and regulates land use under and around the San Francisco Bay.

Benefit Assessment Act of 1982
Government Code §54703, et seq.
Benefit assessments for public works and flood control.

Benefit assessments (special assessments)
Involuntary charges on property owners to pay for public works that directly benefit property.
(*Resource:* Assessing The Benefits of Benefit Assessments (Second Edition), SLG Committee)
(*Also see*: 1911 Act, 1913 Act, 1915 Act, 1972 Act, 1982 Act)

Bond oversight
Government Code §53410, et seq.
Local officials must issue annual reports on how they spend bond funds.

Bonds
Most local bonds require voter approval or property owners' approval.

General obligation bonds for cities, counties, & special districts need 2/3-voter approval.
California Constitution Article XVI, §18 (a)

General obligation bonds for school districts require 55% voter approval.
California Constitution Article XVI, §18 (b)

Revenue bonds require majority-voter approval.
Government Code §54300, et seq.

Assessment bonds require property owners' approval in a weighted ballot election.
California Constitution Article XIII D, §4 and Government Code §53753

Booking fees
Government Code §29550
Counties can charge cities fees to recover their costs of booking people into county jails.

Bradley-Burns Uniform Local Sales and Use Tax Law
Revenue and Taxation Code §7200, et seq.
Counties and cities levy sales taxes for general purposes.

Brown Act
Government Code §54950, et seq.
Open meeting law for local governments, similar to Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Law.
(*Resource:* The Brown Act: Open Meetings for Legislative Bodies, Attorney General,
http://caag.state.ca.us/publications/index.htm#opengovernment)
(*Resource:* Open & Public III, League of California Cities)

CDIAC (California Debt and Investment Advisory Commission)
Government Code §8855, et seq.
The State Treasurer's panel that monitors local governments' bonds and debt.

CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)
Public Resources Code §21000, et seq.
Public agencies must consider the environmental effects of development projects.
(*Resource:* Guide to CEQA, Solano Press Books)
(*Resource:* Resources Agency's website. http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa)

CEQA Guidelines
14 Cal. Code Reg. §15000, et seq.
The state regulations that interpret CEQA.
(*Resource:* Guide to CEQA, Solano Press Books)

Cities have the same taxing powers as charter cities
Government Code §37100.5
Any city can levy any tax that any charter city can levy, with voter approval.

City charters
California Constitution Article XI, §3 & §5
Government Code §34400, et seq. & §34450, et seq.
Cities can adopt local charters, giving them control over their municipal affairs.
(*Resource:* Tailor-Made Government, SLG Committee)

City council districts
Government Code §34870, et seq.
Voters can elect city council members "by divisions" or "from divisions."

City council salaries
Government Code §36516
City council members' salaries are based on the city's population.

City council vacancies
Government Code §1770 & §36513
Vacancies on a city council are filled by appointment or election.

City name changes
Government Code §34500
Cities can change their names by ordinance.

City ordinances
Government Code §36900, et seq.
Procedures for adopting city ordinances and penalties for violations.

City property
Government Code §37350, et seq.
Cities can buy, lease, develop, and sell property.

City selection committee
Government Code §50270, et seq.
A committee of mayors in each county that appoints city officials to other boards.

Coastal Act
Public Resources Code §30000, et seq.
State law requires special planning and permits for development in the coastal zone.

COGs (Councils of Governments)
Government Code §6500, et seq. & §65582 (b)
Joint powers agencies between counties and cities that prepare regional plans.

Community facilities districts (Mello-Roos)
Government Code §53311, et seq.
Local agencies can levy special taxes to pay for public works and some public services.
(*Also see:* "Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act")

Community Redevelopment Law (redevelopment)
Health & Safety Code §33000, et seq.
Redevelopment agencies use tax increment revenues and eminent domain in blighted areas.

Compensation of local officials
- Charter cities: California Constitution Article XI, §5 (b)
- General law cities: Government Code §36516
- Charter counties: California Constitution Article XI, §4
- General law counties: California Constitution Article XI, §1 (b)
- Special districts: varies by principal act.
- Benefits: Government Code §53200, et seq.

(*Resource:* Deregulating Local Officials' Compensation, SLG Committee)

Conflict of Interest
Government Code §1090, et seq. & §87100, et seq.
2 Cal. Code of Reg. §18700
Public officials can't participate in decisions in which they have financial interests.
(*Resource:* Conflicts of Interest 2004, Attorney General,
http://caag.state.ca.us/publications/index.htm#opengovernment)
(*Resource:* A Local Officials' Guide to Ethics Laws, Institute for Local Government)

Conservation easements
Civil Code §815, et seq.
Landowners grant easements to preserve open-space and prohibit development.
(*Also see:* "open space easements" and "agriculture conservation easements")

Contract cities ("Gonsalves Act")
Government Code §51350
Cities can contract with the county for municipal services.

Contracts and bidding
- Cities: Public Contract Code §20160, et seq.
- Counties: Public Contract Code §20120, et seq. & §20150, et seq.
- Districts: *See* the chart at Public Contract Code §20100, et seq.

State law spells out bidding and contract procedures for cities, counties, and special districts.
(*Resource:* Summary of California State Laws, Construction Industry Research Board)

Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act (LAFCO)
Government Code §56000, et seq.
State law governing city and special district boundaries; also creates a LAFCO in every county.
(*Resource:* Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, ALG Committee)
(*Resource:* "Annexation and Boundary Issues," Detwiler in Selmi & Manaster)

Council of government (COG)
Government Code §6500, et seq.
Joint powers agencies between counties and cities that prepare regional plans.

County boundary changes
- Minor: Government Code §23200, et seq.
- Major: Government Code §23230, et seq.

How counties can change their boundaries.

County Budget Act
Government Code §29000, et seq.
How counties prepare and adopt their annual budgets.

County charters
California Constitution Article XI §4
Government Code §23700, et seq.
Counties can adopt and revise charters giving them limited local autonomy.
(*Resource:* Tailor-Made Government, SLG Committee)

County classes, counties classified by size
Government Code §28020, et seq.
State law sorts counties into 58 classes based on their populations.

County fees deregulated
Government Code §54985
County supervisors can set and change fees for county services.

County formation
Government Code §23300, et seq.
Procedures for forming new counties.
(*Resource:* Suburban Secession, SLG Committee)

County officers, named & classified
Government Code §24000, et seq. & §24300, et seq.
State law spells out the names and duties of county officers.

County ordinances
Government Code §25120, et seq.
Procedures for adopting county ordinances and penalties for violations.

County property development
Government Code §25515, et seq.
Counties can acquire, sell, lease, and develop county-owned property.

Davis-Stirling Common Interest Development Act
Civil Code §1350, et seq.
State law that governs common interest developments (homeowners' associations).

Development agreements
Government Code §65864, et seq.
Counties and cities can sign long-term agreements with builders to develop property.

Development approvals (Anti-NIMBY Law)
Government Code §65589.5
Cities and counties must approve certain housing developments, even if neighbors object.

Density bonuses
Government Code §65915, et seq.
Financial incentives to developers that build affordable housing.

Developer fees (AB 1600)
Government Code §66000, et seq.
Counties and cities can charge developer impact fees to pay for public works.
(*Resource:* Exactions and Impact Fees In California, Solano Press Books)

Documentary real estate transfer tax
California Constitution Article XIII B, §4 (limit)
Revenue & Taxation Code §11901, et seq.
Counties and cities levy this tax on the sale of real property.

Eminent domain
California Constitution Article I, §19
Code of Civil Procedure §1230.010, et seq.
Public entities can take private property for public use, with just compensation and due process.
(*Resource: Kelo & California*, SLG Committee)

ERAF (Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund)
Revenue & Taxation Code §97.2 & §97.37
Shifts property tax revenues from local governments to schools.

Ethics training
Government Code §53234, et seq.
Elected and key appointed officials must take biennial ethics training courses.

Expense claims
Government Code §53232, et seq.
Rules governing reimbursement of local officials' expense claims.

Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC)
Government Code §81000, et seq. & §83100, et seq.
The state commission that administers the Political Reform Act.

Farmland conservancy program (CFCP)
Public Resources Code §10200, et seq.
Easements that preserve agricultural land by prohibiting development.

Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program
Government Code §65570
The State Department of Conservation maps farmland conversions.
(*Resource:* Division of Land Resource Protection, www.consrv.ca.gov/DLRP/fmmp/index.htm)

Farmland security zones
Government Code §51296, et seq.
Landowners contract with counties to preserve farmland (part of the Williamson Act).

Fees can't exceed costs
Government Code §50076 & §66016, et seq.
Local fees can't exceed the reasonable cost of providing the service.

Fire protection districts
Health & Safety Code §13800, et seq.
Special districts that provide fire protection and other emergency services.

Fire suppression assessments
Government Code §50078, et seq.
Local agencies that provide fire suppression can levy assessments for fire services.

Force account limits
The amounts over which local governments must use private labor instead of public employees.
(*Resource:* Summary of California State Laws, Construction Industry Research Board)

Gann limit (Proposition 4)
California Constitution Article XIII B
Government Code §7900, et seq.
Public agencies can't spend more than they spent in the prior year, with adjustments.
(*Also see:* "Appropriations limit" and "Proposition 4")

General law cities
Government Code §36501, et seq.
Most cities rely on state laws to spell out their governance structure and duties.

General plan
Government Code §65300, et seq.
Every county and city must adopt a general plan that guides their land use decisions.
(*Resource:* General Plan Guidelines, OPR)
(*Resource:* Curtin's California Land Use and Planning Law, Solano Press Books)

General Plan Guidelines
Government Code §65040.2
OPR's advisory guidelines on how to prepare general plans.
(*Resource:* General Plan Guidelines, OPR)

General tax
California Constitution Article XIII C, §2
Government Code §53720, et seq.
General tax revenues are used for general purposes. General taxes need majority-voter approval.

Geologic Hazard Abatement Districts (GHADs)
Public Resources Code §26500, et seq.
Districts that finance the prevention, mitigation, abatement, or control of geologic hazards.

Gift of public funds prohibited
California Constitution Article XVI, §6
Public officials can't give away or loan public money.

Gonsalves Act (contract cities)
Government Code §51350
Cities can contract with the county for municipal services.

Granny flats (second units)
Government Code §65852.1
Counties and cities must approve additional dwelling units that meet certain conditions.

Home rule powers
California Constitution Article XI, §5
Charter cities can control their own municipal affairs.

Housing element
Government Code §65580, et seq.
Part of a general plan that spells out housing data, goals, and implementation programs.

Incompatibility of office doctrine
Government Code §1126, et seq.
Local officials can't engage in employment and activities that conflict with their duties.

Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank, Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank)
Government Code §63000, et seq.
State agency that gives grants and loans for public works projects.

Infrastructure finance
State law provides several ways for local governments to pay for public works.
(*Resource:* California Debt Issuance Primer, CDIAC)
(*Resource:* "Debt Chart," SLG Committee)

Infrastructure Financing Districts (IFDs)
Government Code §53395, et seq.
IFDs can use property tax increment revenues to pay for public works in nonblighted areas.
(*Resource:* "IFD information sheet," SLG Committee)

Initiative, Referendum & Recall
- Cities: Elections Code §9200, et seq., §9235, et seq., & §11000, et seq.
- Counties: Elections Code §9100, et seq., §9140, et seq., & §11000, et seq.
- Special districts: Elections Code §9300, et seq., §9340, et seq., & §11000, et seq.

Procedures for local initiatives, referenda and recalls.

Integrated financing districts
Government Code §53175, et seq.
The initial developer builds the public works and gets repaid by later builders.

Interest rate limit on local bonds
Government Code §53530, et seq.
State law limits the interest rates on local bonds.

Investment of surplus funds
California Constitution Article XI, §11
Government Code §53601 & §53635, et seq.
State law limits how local officials invest their temporarily idle funds.

JPA (joint powers agreement, joint powers agency)
Government Code §6500, et seq.
Public agencies can enter into agreements to jointly exercise any common power.
(*Resource:* Governments Working Together, SLG Committee [in press])

LAFCO (Local Agency Formation Commission)
Government Code §56000, et seq.
Commission in each county that regulates the boundaries of cities and special districts.
(*Resource:* Guide to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, ALG Committee)
(*Resource:* "Annexation and Boundary Issues," Detwiler in Selmi & Manaster)

Landscaping & Lighting Act of 1972
Streets & Highways Code §22500, et seq.
Local officials can charge benefit assessments to pay for public works and public services.

Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF)
Government Code §16429.1, et seq.
Local governments can invest their temporarily-idle funds with the State Treasurer.

Mailed ballot elections
Elections Code §4000
Local elections can be conducted by mail.

Marks-Roos Local Bond Pooling Act of 1985
Government Code §6584, et seq.
Local officials can pool their bonds to lower their overhead costs.

Maxims of jurisprudence
Civil Code §3509, et seq.
Overarching principles that guide the legal system.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act (Mello-Roos Act)
Government Code §53311, et seq.
Local agencies can levy special taxes to pay for public works and some public services.
(*Also see:* "community facilities districts")

Meyers-Milias-Brown Act
Government Code §3500, et seq.
Governs employer-employee relations for counties, cities, and special districts.

Mills Act (historic preservation)
Government Code §50280, et seq.
Revenue & Taxation Code §439
Property owners can contract to preserve their historic properties and get lower property tax bills.

Municipal advisory council (MAC)
Government Code §31010
County supervisors can create an advisory council to represent an unincorporated area.

Naylor Act (surplus school sites)
Education Code §17485, et seq.
Governs the sale of surplus school property.

New counties (county formation)
Government Code §23300, et seq.
Procedures for forming new counties.
(*Resource:* Suburban Secession, SLG Committee)

Open space easements
Government Code §51070, et seq.
Land owners can grant easements to protect open space and prohibit development.
(Also see: "conservation easements" and "agriculture conservation easements")

Office of Planning and Research (OPR)
Government Code §65025, et seq.
Part of the Office of the Governor that works on land use planning and environmental quality.
(*Resource:* Office of Planning and Research's website, www.opr.ca.gov)

Ordinances
- Cities: Government Code §36900, et seq.
- Counties: Government Code §25120, et seq.
Procedures for counties and cities to adopt local laws.

Parcel taxes (special taxes)
Government Code §50075, et seq.
Local governments can levy special taxes 2/3-voter approval.

Permit Streamlining Act
Government Code §65920, et seq.
Public agencies must meet statutory deadlines for decisions on development projects.

Planning, Zoning, and Development Law
Government Code §65000, et seq.
Counties and cities set up planning agencies, adopt general plans, and make land use decisions.
(*Resource:* Curtin's California Land Use and Planning Law, Solano Press Books)
(*Resource:* Planning, Zoning & Development Laws OPR www.opr.ca.gov/publications/#pubs-P)

Police powers
California Constitution Article XI, §7
Government's power to regulate private behavior for public purposes.
Cities and counties can enforce local ordinances that don't conflict with general laws.

Political Reform Act of 1974
Government Code §81000, et seq.
Prohibits public officials from having economic conflicts of interest.

Prezoning
Government Code §65859
Cities can zone unincorporated territory before annexation.

Property tax allocation (AB 8)
Revenue & Taxation Code §95, et seq.
Allocation of property tax revenues to local governments and schools.
(*Also see:* Demystifying the California Property Tax Allocation System, Santa Clara County)
(*Resource:* Property Tax Allocation, SLG Committee)

Proposition 1A
California Constitution Article XI §15, Article XIII §25.5, & Article XIII B §6
Protects local governments' financing from the state government.

Proposition 4 (1979)
California Constitution Article XIII B
Government Code §7900, et seq.
Public agencies can't spend more than they spent in the prior year, with adjustments.
(*Also see:* "Gann limit")

Proposition 13 (1978)
California Constitution Article XIII A
Limits property tax rate to 1%, limits reassessments, requires voter approval for special taxes.

Proposition 62 (1986)
Government Code §53720, et seq.
Requires voter approval for local special taxes and most local general taxes.

Proposition 172 (1993)
California Constitution Article XIII §35
Government Code §30051, et seq.
Dedicates ½¢ state sales tax for local public safety.

Proposition 218 (1996)
California Constitution Articles XIII C & XIII D
Government Code §53750, et seq.
Requires voter or property owner approval for local taxes, assessments, and fees.

Publication requirements
Government Code §6000, et seq.
Laws governing the publication of public notices.

Public Records Act
Government Code §6250, et seq.
Requires public access to public records, with limited exceptions.
(*Resource:* First Amendment Pocket Guide, www.thefirstamendment.org/publicrecordsact.pdf)
(*Resource:* Pocket Guide to the Public Records Act, CNPA)
(*Resource:* Public Records Act Summary, Attorney General,
http://caag.state.ca.us/publications/index.htm#opengovernment)

Quimby Act
Government Code §66477
Cities and counties can require subdividers to dedicate land for parks.

Record retention and destruction
Rules for retaining and destroying local government documents.
- Cities: Government Code §34090, et seq.
- Counties: Government Code §26205, et seq.
- Special districts: Government Code §60200, et seq.

Redevelopment (Community Redevelopment Law)
California Constitution Article XVI, §16
Health & Safety Code §33000, et seq.
Redevelopment agencies use tax increment revenues and eminent domain in blighted areas.

Affordable housing (20% set-aside)
Health & Safety Code §33334.2
Agencies must put money into a Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund.

"Blight" defined
Health & Safety Code §33030, §33031, & §33320.1
Physical and economic conditions of blight in urbanized areas.

Military base conversion redevelopment
Health & Safety Code §33492, et seq.
Accelerates the conversion of former military bases to civilian uses.

Natural disasters
Health & Safety Code §34000, et seq.
Accelerated redevelopment after natural disasters.

Polanco Act
Health & Safety Code §33459, et seq.
Redevelopment agencies can clean-up properties with hazardous substances.

Reporting requirements
Health & Safety Code §33080, et seq.
Redevelopment agencies must provide annual audits and reports.
(*Resource:* "Redevelopment Agency Reporting Requirements," SLG Committee)

State lawsuits (Department of Finance)
Health & Safety Code §33501 (b)
Finance can sue to challenge redevelopment plans.

Relocation benefits
Government Code §7260, et seq.
Public agencies must pay relocation benefits to displaced property owners and tenants.

Revenue Bond Law of 1941
Government Code §54300, et seq.
Local governments can issue revenue bonds with majority-voter approval.

Right-to-farm ordinance
Civil Code §3482.5
Agricultural activity isn't a nuisance and can't be abated as a nuisance.

Roster of public agencies
Government Code §53051
The Secretary of State and county clerks must keep rosters of public agencies.
(*Resource:* California Roster, www.ss.ca.gov/executive/ca_roster)

Rural economic development
Government Code §15373, et seq.
Programs to improve rural economic conditions and infrastructure.

SAFE Act (State Assistance for Fire Equipment Act)
Government Code §8589.8, et seq.
Office of Emergency Services finances firefighting equipment for local agencies.

Sales tax sharing
California Constitution Article XIII, §29
Government Code §55700, et seq.
Cities and counties can enter into sales tax revenue sharing agreements.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act
Public Resources Code §2690, et seq.
Department of Conservation maps known seismic hazards.

School developer fees
Education Code §17620
Government Code §65995
School districts can levy developer fees to pay for new schools.
(*Resource:* Exactions and Impact Fees in California, Solano Press Books)

SLONs (Securitized Limited Obligation Notes)
Government Code §53835, et seq.
Special districts can issue SLONs to borrow money against their existing revenues.

Special assessments (benefit assessments)
Involuntary charges on property owners to pay for public works that directly benefit property.
(*Resource:* Assessing The Benefits of Benefit Assessments (Second Edition), SLG Committee)
(*Also see*: 1911 Act, 1913 Act, 1915 Act, 1972 Act, 1982 Act)

Special districts' audits
Government Code §26909
Special districts must have regular, independent audits.

Special districts, definition
Government Code §50077 (d)
Revenue & Taxation Code §95 (m)
A local government that provides limited services and facilities to a defined geographic area.
(*Resource:* What's So Special About Special Districts? (Third Edition), SLG Committee)

Special districts' principal acts
State laws that govern each type of special district.
For example: Community Services District Law is Government Code §61000, et seq.
(*Resource:* Appendix A, Special Districts Annual Report, State Controller's Office)

Special legislation prohibited
California Constitution Article IV, §16
Special legislation is unconstitutional if a general law can apply.

Special tax oversight
Government Code §50075.1, §50075.3, & §50075.5
Local officials must issue annual reports on how they spend special tax revenues.

Special taxes
California Constitution Articles XIII A, §4 and XIII C, §2
Government Code §50075 et seq., §53722, et seq., & §53970, et seq.
Special tax revenues are restricted to special uses. Special taxes require 2/3-voter approval.

Specific plans
Government Code §65450, et seq.
Implementation program carrying out the general plan in part of a county or city.

Standby charges (Uniform Standby Charge Procedures Act)
California Constitution Article XIII D §6 (b)(4)
Government Code §54984, et seq.
Local agencies can charge unimproved properties for sewer and water facilities.

State mandated local programs (SB 90)
California Constitution Article XIII B, §6
Government Code §17500, et seq.
State government must pay for the local costs of new state-mandated local programs.

Subdivision Map Act
Government Code §66410, et seq.
State law regulates the subdivision of land with tentative maps and parcel maps.
(*Resource:* Subdivision Map Act Manual, Solano Press Books)

Subdivided Lands Act
Business & Professions Code §11000, et seq.
Land can be divided into five or more parcels for sale, lease, or finance.

Surplus lands (state agencies)
Government Code §11011.1
State departments must offer their surplus land to local governments.

Surplus property (local agencies)
Government Code §50568 & §54220, et seq.
Procedures for local officials to dispose of surplus property.

Tax
Involuntary charge against an individual, landowner, or business without regard for benefit.
(*Resource:* "Comparing Local Taxes, Assessments, and Fees," SLG Committee)
(*Also see:* "general tax" and "special tax.")

Temporary borrowing
Government Code §53820, et seq., §53840, et seq., & §53850, et seq., §53859, et seq.
Local governments can use "dry period loans" to borrow money against future revenues.

Timberland Productivity Act
Government Code §51100, et seq.
Preferential property tax assessment of timberland. Similar to the Williamson Act.

Tribal consultation
Government Code Section §65352.3
Cities and Counties must consult with tribes before adopting or amending general plans.
(*Resource*: SB 18 Tribal Consultation Guidelines, OPR)

UDEL (Uniform District Election Law)
Election Code §10500, et seq.
Procedures for holding local government elections.

Urgency clause
California Constitution Article IV, §8 (d)
Urgency bills protect the public peace, health, or safety and require 2/3-vote in each house.

Validation suits
Code of Civil Procedure §860, et seq.
Lawsuits that ask a court to validate bonds, boundaries, or other decisions.

VLF (Vehicle License Fees)
California Constitution Article XI, §15
Revenue & Taxation Code §11005
A state excise tax on motor vehicles in lieu of local property taxes.

Williamson Act
- Contracts: Government Code §51200, et seq.
- Subventions: Government Code §16140, et seq.
- Reassessments: Revenue & Taxation Code §421

Landowners can contract with counties to conserve their farmland and open space.
Landowners get lower property tax bills.
Counties get state subventions to make up for the lost property tax revenues.

Zoning
Government Code §65800, et seq.
County and city zoning ordinances set land use standards and restrict land uses.

1911 Act (Improvement Act of 1911)
Streets & Highways Code §5000, et seq.
One of the traditional benefit assessment laws to pay for public works with assessment bonds.

1913 Act (Municipal Improvement Act of 1913)
Streets & Highways Code §10000, et seq.
One of the traditional benefit assessment laws to pay for public works with assessment bonds.

1915 Act (Improvement Bond Act of 1915)
Streets & Highways Code §8500, et seq.
One of the traditional benefit assessment laws that pay for public works with assessment bonds.

1972 Act (Landscaping and Lighting Act of 1972)
Streets & Highways Code §22500, et seq.
Local governments levy benefit assessments to pay for public works and public services.

1982 Act (Benefit Assessment Act of 1982)
Government Code § 54703, et seq.
Local governments levy benefit assessments to pay for public works and public services.

Retrieving Official Documents

California Statutes

1. Go to the home page for the Legislative Counsel: www.leginfo.ca.gov

2. Scroll down to the button "CALIFORNIA LAW" and click

3. In the next screen, find the Code that you want to search. For example, if you want to read Government Code §65302 (the contents of general plans), check the box for "Government Code" then scroll to near the bottom of the page and click on the button "Search"

4. In the next screen, look at the section numbers highlighted in blue, and scroll down to "65300-65303.4" and click

5. In the next screen, you'll see a series of code sections. Scroll down to "65302"

Attorney General's Opinions

1. Go to the home page for the California Attorney General: http://caag.state.ca.us

2. Scroll down to "LEGAL OPINIONS" and click on "Opinions of the Attorney General"

3. In the next screen, scroll down and click on "Opinions Search"

4. In the next screen, fill in the field. For example, if you want to see the AG's opinions since 1986 that contain the word "LAFCO," type "LAFCO" and click on the button "SEARCH"

5. In the next screen, following this example, you have 12 citations to choose from. For example, if you want to read Opinion 99-602, click on "99-602"

6. When Opinion No. 99-602 comes up, you can either read it on-line or print it. Because the opinion is 8 pages long, it might be easier to print the opinion.

Administrative Regulations

1. Go to the home page for the Office of Administrative Law: http://ccr.oal.ca.gov

2. In the upper left-hand corner, click on "California Code of Regulations"

3. In the next screen, scroll down the left-hand column to the Title that contains the topic you want to read. For example, for the CEQA Regulations, click on "TITLE 14. Natural Resources"

4. In the next screen, scroll down to the section you want to read.

California Court Decisions

1. Go to the home page for the California court system: www.courtinfo.ca.gov

2. In the upper left-hand corner of the screen, click on "opinions."

3. In the next screen, near the upper left-hand corner, click on the box that says "Searchable Opinions 1850 – Present."

4. In the next screen, near the bottom of the page, click on the button "Continue."

5. In the next screen (now you're at a LEXIS NEXIS screen), scroll down to the bottom of the page and check the box that says "I have read and agree to these Terms and Conditions."

6. Then, on the same screen, click "VIEW OPINIONS →"

7. In the next screen, there are 2 ways to search for cases. Use the lower method called "Get Opinion by Cite" and enter the citation for the decision you want to retrieve. For example, if you want to read *Beach-Courchesne v. City of Diamond Bar* (2000) 80 Cal.App.4th 388, then fill out the three fields:
   - In the first box called "Enter Volume" insert "80"
   - In the pull down menu called "Select Reporter" click on "Cal.App.4th"
   - In the third box called "Enter Page #" insert "388"

8. When the *Beach-Courchesne* decision comes up, you can either read it on-line or you can print the case. Because that decision is 11 pages long, it might be easier to print the opinion.

Useful Websites

Government Websites

1. **California State Senate**. www.sen.ca.gov

2. **California State Assembly.** www.assembly.ca.gov

3. **California State Governor's Office.** www.governor.ca.gov

4. **California State Controller's Office.** www.sco.ca.gov

5. **The California Courts**. www.courtinfo.ca.gov

Department of Transportation. www.dot.ca.gov
Caltrans information on road conditions, traffic operations, local roads.

Fair Political Practices Commission. www.fppc.ca.gov
Political Reform Act forms; filing deadlines, ethics orientation.

Legislative Analyst's Office. www.lao.ca.gov
Analyses on the budget, fiscal and policy legislation.

Legislative Counsel. www.leginfo.ca.gov
Posts the statutes, bills, analyses, votes, histories, publications and CA codes.

Secretary of State. www.ss.ca.gov
Elections, voter, campaign, lobby information, business filing, notary, public commissions.

State of California. www.ca.gov/state/portal/myca_homepage.jsp
Links to all the state agencies, counties, and cities and departments.

U.S. Senate. www.senate.gov and the **U.S. House of Representatives.** www.house.gov

Land Use and Planning Websites

Need information on California's public water agencies? The **Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)**. www.acwanet.com

The **California Association of LAFCOs (CALAFCO)** serves the state's boundary commissions. www.calafco.org

You can reach professional planners at the **California Chapter of the American Planning Association**. www.calapa.org

Need information on **California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**?
- The statute. http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa
- The "CEQA Guidelines" are the regulations that interpret the statute. http://ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/guidelines

The **California Environmental Resources Evaluation System (CERES)** main website. http://ceres.ca.gov

Need information about Smart Growth? The **California Futures Network**'s site is great starting point. www.calfutures.org

The **California Special Districts Association (CSDA)** is the umbrella group for districts. www.csda.net

The **California State Association of Counties (CSAC)** provides county information. www.csac.counties.org/

Where do reporters get their land use information? The **Foundation for American Communications**. www.facsnet.org

The state's **Land Use Planning Information Network (LUPIN)** is a great starting point. http://ceres.ca.gov/planning
- Need city and county general plans? http://ceres.ca.gov/planning/plans/index.html

The **League of California Cities** is the trade association for all 478 municipalities. www.cacities.org

The **League of California Cities** also sponsors a local government finance website. www.californiacityfinance.com

The Governor's **Office of Planning and Research (OPR)** advises local planners. www.opr.ca.gov
- OPR's "General Plan Guidelines" advise planners on how to plan. http://opr.ca.gov/planning/PDFs/General_Plan_Guidelines_2003.pdf
- OPR compiles the state's "Planning, Zoning, and Development Laws." http://opr.ca.gov/publications/PDFs/PZ_D%202006.pdf
- OPR's "The Planner's Book of Lists" provides lots of information about local planning. http://opr.ca.gov/planning/PDFs/2005bol.pdf

The **Senate Local Government Committee** offers diverse and eclectic resources. www.sen.ca.gov/locgov

Policy Research and Databases

The **California On-Line Directory** "COLD" lists state employee's phone numbers.
http://cold.ca.gov

The **California Research Bureau** (part of the State Library) produces reports on California issues. www.library.ca.gov/html/statseg2a.cfm

The **California Courts'** website provides copies of court decisions.
www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions

Researching the **Code of California Regulations**? There's a search function.
http://ccr.oal.ca.gov

The **Department of Finance's Demographic Research Unit** posts population and census data.
www.dof.ca.gov/html/Demograp/druhpar.htm

The **National Conference of State Legislatures** compares California to other states.
http://ncsl.org

The **Public Policy Institute of California** is an independent research center with statistical information and analytical reports. www.ppic.org

The **Reason Public Policy Institute** offers another point of view on public policy issues.
www.rppi.org/index.html

The **Senate Office of Research** (part of the California State Senate) produces policy reports.
www.sen.ca.gov/sor

Thomas (a service of the Library of Congress) posts information about federal legislation.
http://thomas.loc.gov

Current Awareness

"**Rough & Tumble**" is Jack Kavanagh's daily digest of news stories about California politics.
www.rtumble.com

The **"California Planning & Development Report"** is Bill Fulton's monthly newsletter.
www.cp-dr.com

Read the **California Attorney General's** opinions for free.
http://caag.state.ca.us/opinions