



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

PRESS RELEASE

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DPW DIRECTOR JOHN PRESLEIGH TO RETIRE

The County of Santa Cruz announced today that Public Works Director John Presleigh, who led the County through multiple cycles of storm recovery and was a key statewide advocate for local transportation dollars, will retire in April.

Presleigh joined the County in 1991 as a senior civil engineer. Under former Director Tom Bolich, Presleigh was promoted to Assistant Director, overseeing surveying, development review, road design, operations, road engineering, redevelopment, and other functions. In 2009, he was made Director of the Department of Public Works.

"For nearly three decades, John has been an ally to the people of Santa Cruz County, advocating on their behalf to improve local transportation infrastructure," County Administrative Officer Carlos Palacios said. "The County family will miss his experience, wisdom and passion, and we wish him the best in his retirement."

One of the County's largest departments, the Public Works Department oversees public infrastructure including transportation, solid waste, sanitation, parking, drainage, recycling programs, County Service Areas, and special districts. It is responsible for maintaining the County's 600-mile roadway system, including planning and engineering, maintenance, bridges, drainage, encroachments, signalization and bikeway projects.

Presleigh guided the County through recovery from multiple natural disasters. During the winter of 2016-17, storms caused more than \$122 million in roadway damage in the unincorporated area alone – the costliest winter in County history.



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To speed recovery, Presleigh fast-tracked a number of projects, brought in storm recovery experts and hired outside consultants to process as many repair projects as possible in the shortest possible time frame. The Department's work was recognized by the U.S. House of Representatives, California Legislature and Board of Supervisors, and was granted a 2017 "Community Hero" award by the Aptos Chamber of Commerce.

A staunch advocate for infrastructure improvements and local road funding – including Measure D, approved by local voters in 2016 – Presleigh is also the immediate past president of the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC). Presleigh headed that organization during debate over SB 1, which raises \$5 billion annually for California roads, bridges and transit. Thanks in part to Presleigh's leadership, Santa Cruz County will see an additional \$115 million in new local streets and roads funding over the next ten years. Presleigh was recently awarded a distinguished 2017 "Circle of Service Award" by the California State Association of Counties.

"I'm particularly proud of all that John's accomplished, especially his key role with CEAC. Thanks to John's tireless efforts in working with our State representatives, and lobbying on behalf of the citizens and motorists of our County, there is finally hope that our local road roads will receive the attention they deserve," Bolich said. "I know the County of Santa Cruz will continue to benefit from John's legacy. I'm sure that John will enjoy his retirement and that he will make very good use of all the time he can now spend with his family. *E moe i kahi wehe, e ka hoahānau!* ("Hang loose, bruddah!")."

"I was lucky enough to work closely with John during a momentous year for California transportation funding," said current CEAC president Jeff Pratt, Director of Public Works for Ventura County. "His work rallying the troops behind SB 1 and getting locally elected leaders across California to support local roads and infrastructure will not soon be forgotten. We owe John a debt of gratitude. His retirement is well-deserved."

Presleigh has undergraduate degrees from Cal Poly-San Luis Obispo and the University of California-Davis. He also has a master's degree in Civil Engineering from San Jose State University. Prior to joining the County, he worked for the City of Sacramento, the California Department of Water Resources, the California Water Resources Control Board, and a private engineering firm.