

IRWA
BUILDING A BETTER WORLD
TOGETHER®

2026-2027

NEWS LETTER

Q1 ISSUE

LOS ANGELES
CHAPTER 1



DIONISIO MARQUEZ
- NEWSLETTER CHAIR



COMMITTEE CHAIRS & BOARD MEMBERS

- Bill Larsen – Professional Development
- Dionisio Marquez – Newsletter
- Jonathan Quan – Educational
- Diane Dominguez – Membership
- Sarah Riggs – Young Professional
- Janelle Parra – Public Agency
- Mike Yoshiba, Esq. – Legal
- April Harvey – Oil & Gas
- Ann Kulikoff – Pipeline
- Ray Mehler – Project Management
- Dionisio Marquez – Relocation
- Bill Larsen – Utilities
- Paul Norlen – Asset Management
- Julie Del Rivo – Nominations & Awards
- Joyce Riggs – Chair, Fall Seminar
- Paul Norlen – Co-Chair, Fall Seminar
- Nicole Galvez – Chair, Valuation Seminar
- Sarah Riggs – Social Media
- Robby Riggs – Luncheon Coordinator

Thank you all for your continued dedication and service to Chapter 1. Your commitment is the foundation of our success. We are delighted to welcome our new chairs and look forward to the fresh perspectives and energy you will bring to our team.

A MESSAGE FROM THE INCOMING PRESIDENT: NEIDY PINUELAS

Welcome to a new year with IRWA Chapter 1! I am honored to step into the role of President and to continue a leadership journey built on service, collaboration, and commitment to our professional community. Thank you for the trust placed in me—I look forward to working alongside each of you as we advance education, connection, and excellence within our chapter.

HONORING OUTGOING PRESIDENT – JULIE DEL RIVO

This year, we extend our deepest gratitude to outgoing President Julie Del Rivo for her exceptional leadership. She has devoted 24 years to public service as Assistant Chief Counsel for Caltrans, championing real property, environmental law, and the complex landscape of eminent domain.

Under her guidance, IRWA Chapter 1 has strengthened collaboration, expanded member engagement, and reinforced our shared commitment to professional development. She has shown us that public service is a calling—one grounded in integrity, courage, and optimism.

Thank you, Julie Del Rivo, for your unwavering dedication and the lasting impact you have made on our chapter.

WELCOMING OUR INCOMING EXECUTIVE BOARD

- **President-Elect:** Alana Edwards
- **Treasurer:** Cheryl De Mucci
- **Secretary:** Steven Johnson

These leaders bring valuable experience, enthusiasm, and dedication to IRWA's mission. Together, we look forward to building upon the strong foundation established over the years.

OPEN OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER

We currently have openings for:

- **Engineering Chair**
- **Environmental Chair**
- **Transportation Chair**

Members interested in co-chairing an existing committee are also welcome—co-chairing offers an excellent opportunity to learn and contribute.

If you're interested, please contact the current President for details on responsibilities and next steps.

continued on next page

UPCOMING EVENTS & EDUCATIONAL LUNCHEONS

New location (LA Metro), Mulholland Conference Room
One Gateway Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012

2026

LUNCHEONS

AUGUST 12
(PAST PRESIDENT'S
LUNCHEON)

SEPTEMBER 23

NOVEMBER 18

**YOUNG
PROFESSIONALS EVENT**
Wayfair Hotel

Downtown Los Angeles
October 1, 2026

UPCOMING FALL SEMINAR

Quiet Canyon
Montebello, CA
October 13, 2026

2027

LUNCHEONS

FEBRUARY 17

APRIL 14

JUNE 16

TENTATIVE

JANUARY 6
UTILITIES COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL EDUCATION

MARCH 3
IRWA CHAPTER 1/SCCAI
JOINT LUNCHEON

MAY 5
VALUATION SEMINAR

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

IRWA Chapter 1 extends heartfelt appreciation to our sponsors—past, present, and future. Your generosity makes it possible for us to continue offering high-quality educational luncheons, seminars, networking events, and member programs.

We are deeply grateful for our sponsors' ongoing commitment and look forward to continuing these partnerships to bring valuable programming to our members.

LOOKING AHEAD

This coming year brings tremendous opportunity:

- To **educate**
- To **collaborate**
- To **innovate**
- To **strengthen our chapter**

The work we do matters—not only for our profession, but for the communities who rely on thoughtful, ethical right-of-way leadership. Thank you for your dedication and continued support.

I am honored to serve as your 2026/2027 Chapter 1 President.

Neidy Pinuelas, SR/WA, RW-RAC, RW-URAC



2026-2027 CHAPTER 1 EXECUTIVE BOARD



Neidy Pinuelas

PRESIDENT



Alana Edwards

PRESIDENT ELECT



Cheryl De Mucci

TREASURER



Steven Johnson

SECRETARY

MY EXPERIENCE AT THE IRWA CONFERENCE 2026 IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA

Connecting, Learning, and Growing in the Right-of-Way Profession

written by
Alana Edwards, President Elect

The 2026 International Right of Way Association (IRWA) Annual Conference in Omaha, Nebraska, was an exceptional opportunity to connect with industry professionals, expand my knowledge, and gain valuable insights into the evolving landscape of right-of-way, land acquisition, and infrastructure development. As a Land & Right-of-Way professional, attending this conference reinforced the importance of collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning within our field.

From the moment I arrived in Omaha, I was impressed by the city's welcoming atmosphere and strong sense of community. The conference brought together professionals from across North America and around the world representing a wide range of disciplines, including land acquisition, relocation assistance, valuation, project management, engineering, public agencies, utilities, and transportation organizations.



EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

One of the most rewarding aspects of the conference was participating in educational sessions led by industry experts. Topics ranged from emerging regulatory requirements and infrastructure expansion to negotiation strategies, stakeholder engagement, and best practices in project delivery. These sessions provided practical knowledge and valuable perspectives that can be directly applied to the challenges we face in today's right-of-way environment.



Region 1 Presidents and VPs

MEANINGFUL NETWORKING EVENTS

One of the conference's greatest strengths was the variety of networking opportunities available to attendees. These events created an environment where professionals could build relationships, exchange ideas, and strengthen connections within the right-of-way community.

I especially enjoyed attending the Young Professionals Networking Event, where it was great to reconnect with colleagues and friends while also meeting new professionals from across the industry. Another memorable experience was the networking event held at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium.

I also appreciated the Canadian Networking Event, which offered a fun and relaxed atmosphere complete with live music. The conference concluded on a high note with the 80s-themed Gala. Attendees embraced the theme by dressing in their best 1980s-inspired outfits, creating a fun and energetic atmosphere.



INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION

In addition to attending educational sessions and networking events, I participated in the International Committee Meeting, where discussions focused on strengthening international collaboration, expanding member engagement, and supporting the global growth of the profession.

An important aspect of these meetings involved member voting and organizational decision-making, allowing attendees to actively participate in shaping the future direction of the Association. Being involved in this process reinforced the value of member engagement and the collective responsibility we share in supporting the continued success and growth of IRWA.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

One of my biggest takeaways from the conference was the importance of adaptability. As infrastructure needs continue to grow and evolve, right-of-way professionals must remain informed, flexible, and prepared to address changing regulations, stakeholder expectations, and project demands.

Equally important was the reminder that the strength of our profession lies in the relationships we build. Whether through educational sessions, networking events, committee meetings, or informal conversations, the conference demonstrated the value of connecting with others who share a commitment to excellence in the right-of-way industry.

I am grateful for the opportunity to attend the 2026 IRWA Annual Conference and look forward to applying what I learned to future projects. The experience strengthened my professional knowledge, expanded my network, and reinforced my commitment to supporting the continued growth, collaboration, and success of the right-of-way profession.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

RAY MEHLER – SR/WA, PMP

How long have you been a member of IRWA?

21 years

What's your background?

I'm originally an aerospace engineer, which is what brought me to SoCal. When the US won the Cold War, I was still pretty young and chose to reinvent myself into the IT business. Along the way I met one of the owners of Epic Land, who recruited me into right of way. I love working in this space between engineers and attorneys, with appraisers, title officers and surveyors thrown into the mix to keep things really interesting.

What do you enjoy most about being part of IRWA?

I enjoy the people. We're a talkative and nerdy bunch making our livings in our small, unique community. When I pivoted to right of way twenty-one years ago, I witnessed that Epic's owners had a personal relationship with their professional association—something I had never seen in engineering or IT. IRWA is very special.

What has IRWA done for you, or what does it mean to you?

First, it gave me the education I needed to quickly finish my pivot from IT to ROW. And that gave me the basic knowledge to do the work and to receive great mentorship along the way. Second, IRWA has given me the environment to build an excellent network throughout the profession. I love it when my current employer, managed by engineers, has a potentially difficult question and I can either quickly answer the question, or know who to call for an answer. And third, it means much to be able to approach my professional association with a personal approach that is rooted in friendship, honesty and integrity.



Tell us about your current role and organization.

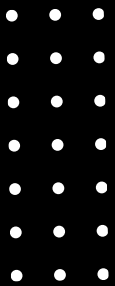
I wear three hats in right of way. I serve on IRWA's International Executive Committee, where I am currently the International Treasurer. My regular job is with LA County Sanitation Districts where I am a Real Property Agent, acquiring temporary rights to support construction, acquiring permanent rights from other agencies, managing over \$8 million annual lease revenue, developing commercial leases, and providing research for asset management decisions. And I work part-time for my own firm providing acquisition, relocation, and project and program management.

What do you see as the biggest opportunities facing the right of way profession today?

I see huge opportunities for incoming and mid-career IRWA members to develop their professional skills. The International Professional Education Committee has been aggressively updating, rewriting and developing new courses for the past several years, giving us members current courses and new courses responsive to changes in the right of way profession. Examples of new courses include the three-part series for right of way project management: C306 Project Mgt Basics (August 11), C307 Project Mgt Applications (Pilot on August 27) and C308 Case Studies (in development). Coming soon are courses in Acquisition for Electrical Distribution, Rail Transportation, and Acquisition for Pipeline Projects. IRWA is also moving more courses to on demand format to make our education more accessible. All of these improvements are made possible by generous grants from the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF).

What challenges do you think the industry will need to address in the coming years?

Adapting to the changes underway from Artificial Intelligence. We can see already that AI enables right of way professionals to draft better conveyance documents and agreements with less initial legal support, although final legal review remains critical. AI is also showing itself a helpful research tool to learn the current state of the real estate market and to dig up project, ownership and nonresidential displacee details. While we cannot yet trust AI's results implicitly, with verification it can reduce our work time, making us more productive.



UPCOMING **EVENTS**

IRWA

CHAPTER 1

IRWA CHAPTER 1

PAST PRESIDENTS' LUNCHEON

*Join Us for a Special Luncheon
Honoring Our Past Presidents*



DATE:
AUGUST 12



TIME:
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM



WHO:
IRWA Chapter 1



WHERE:
Metro Headquarters
One Gateway Plaza
15th Floor, Mulholland Room
Los Angeles, CA 90012



COST:
\$40.00 per person
PAYMENT:
Scan the QR Code to
RSVP and submit payment.



PARKING:
Parking is available at the
Metro/Union Station
Parking Lot.

- Parking Fee: \$8.00
- Parking will not
be validated.



RSVP:
**PLEASE RSVP BY
AUGUST 5**



SCAN TO RSVP & PAY



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Networking with fellow Chapter 1
- Recognition of Chapter 1 Past Presidents

- Luncheon and fellowship
- Opportunities to connect with industry professionals



Hosted by IRWA Chapter 1
We look forward to seeing you there!

ESTABLISHED 1934

IRWA

Los Angeles
Chapter 1

WAYFARER
HOTEL

Fall

NETWORKING EVENT

CONNECT. COLLABORATE. COMMUNITY.



THURSDAY
OCTOBER 1



5:00–8:00 PM



THE ROOFTOP AT
THE WAYFARER HOTEL
DTLA



FOOD
PROVIDED.



COCKTAILS &
REFRESHMENTS
AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.



THE WAYFARER HOTEL
813 S. Flower St.
Los Angeles, CA 90017



PARKING STRUCTURE NEXT DOOR
\$15 DAILY PARKING
Enter on 8th St. between
Flower St. & Figueroa St.

We look forward to seeing you there!



RSVP TO SARAH AT SARAHGABRIELLERIGGS@GMAIL.COM



**LEARN &
GROW**



Upcoming Course Schedule*

2026

August 25: SR/WA, SR/WA Study Session & Comprehensive Exam (Virtual)

October 20: C-902, Property Descriptions (Virtual)

November 17 - 18: C-205, Bargaining Negotiations (Virtual)

December 15: C-403, Easement Valuation

*Notice:

All courses are subject to change, locations on in-person classes to be determined.

2027

January 12 - 13: C-502, Nonresidential Relocation Assistance (Virtual)

February 9 - 11: C-421, Valuation of Partial Acquisitions

March 9 - 10: C-219, Introduction to Presentation, Instruction, Facilitation (Downey)

April 13 - 14: C-801, United States Land Titles (Virtual)

May 11 - 12: C-501, Residential Relocation Assistance (Virtual)

June 8 - 9: C-400, Principles of Real Estate Appraisal (Virtual)



BEYOND OUR WALLS



307i - PROJECT MANAGEMENT APPLICATION (PM2) INTEGRATING STANDARDS

Apply practical project management tools to real-world right of way projects while integrating PMBOK® principles and URA compliance.



**LIMITED
SEATS
AVAILABLE!**



DATES

August 27–28,
2026



FORMAT

Virtual
Classroom



TIME

8:00 AM
Central



CREDITS

16
IRWA Credits



LEVEL

Intermediate

WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?

You will learn to:

- Apply PMBOK® principles to right of way (ROW) projects
- Integrate project management practices with URA compliance
- Manage procurement, scope, cost, and risk
- Lead project teams, quality management, and stakeholder communication
- Use Earned Value Management (EVM) and close out projects effectively

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?



Project Managers (PMs)



Acquisition Agents



Appraisers



Relocation Specialists



Engineers & Surveyors



Professionals involved in ROW projects for public agencies, utilities, and private industry

TUITION



\$415

IRWA Members



\$575

Non-Members



BE AMONG THE FIRST

- ✓ Gain practical PM skills for ROW projects
- ✓ Strengthen project delivery and compliance
- ✓ Build toward the future R/W-PM certification



IRWA Credentialing: This course may be applied toward 16 hours of recertification for any IRWA credential, may be used as an elective for the SR/WA Pathway, and is a requirement for IRWA's upcoming R/W-PM certification.



Digital course materials are added to your IRWA account after registration. Printed materials may be purchased through IRWA's Mimeo portal.



SECURE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

REGISTER NOW!



RIGHT OF WAY PROFESSIONALS
BUILDING CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

ENGINEERING SEMINAR

Topic: Project Delivery Methods

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

Diamond	\$5000
Platinum	\$2500
Gold	\$1500
Silver	\$1000
Cocktail Hour	\$5000
Casino	\$2500

LUNCH, DINNER,
COCKTAIL HOUR WITH
HORS D'OEUVRES, AND
CASINO NIGHT

PLEASE CONTACT:

Tim Green

(tgreen@rctc.org) or

Darcy Mendoza

(dmendoza@epicland.com)

FOR SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Hosted By

IRWA CHAPTER 57

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

David Thomas (RCTC)

PANELISTS:

Sal Chavez – SBCTA

Erik Galloway – RCTC

David Thomas – RCTC

Josue Vaglienty – OCTA

THE VICTORIA CLUB

2521 Arroyo Dr Riverside CA 92506

Early Bird: \$125 until 8/17/26

After 8/17/26: \$150

Thursday

Sept. 17, 2026

12:00 pm to

9:00 pm



SAVE THE DATE

IRWA Chapter 67
Presents...



Tribal Lands Seminar

Friday, September 25th, 2026
From 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM



The Holiday Inn-Santa Ana Airport
2726 S. Grand Ave.
Santa Ana, CA 92705

