



Central Valley Communities of Practice: Community Engagement in Action

July 22, 2026

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

Welcome!

Today's Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions
- Presentation
- Q&A Session
- Small Groups Discussions
- Report Back to the Group
- Next Steps & Exit Survey

GIVEAWAY! Win a prize at the end of the session or the grand prize at the end of the series!



Partner Team



Trust for Public Land

National nonprofit with the mission of protecting land and creating parks for people to ensure healthy, livable communities for generations to come.



PlaceWorks

Planning and Design firm that thrives on working with communities to tackle complex problems and develop workable solutions, with extensive experience in Stockton.



WRT

WRT is rooted in ecology, social equity, and community-based planning, with a parks and open space practice that works across scales. WRT works extensively in Fresno.



MIG

Multidisciplinary firm specializing in participatory planning, design, and policy, with extensive experience in Bakersfield.

Icebreaker Activity

Introduce yourself in the chat:

- What is your name?
- What is your organization?
- What is one word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of meaningful community engagement?



Session 4 Parks as a Driver to Improve Public Health



What we heard

- Importance of connecting park planning with public health goals and community well-being
- Park access should account for the unique needs of both rural and urban communities, not just proximity to a park
- Need for more trees, shade structures, water fountains, restrooms, benches, and accessible pathways
- Interest in guided outdoor experiences and family-focused programming that reduce barriers to park use
- Park design should be connected to the desired health outcome
- Cross-sector partnerships among parks agencies, healthcare organizations, and community-based organizations can expand funding and resources

Today's Objectives

Community Engagement in Action

- Learn strategies for community-centered park outreach and engagement.
- Hear from GreenLatinos on how organizations are reaching diverse communities.
- Explore how engagement can support long-term park stewardships



Community Engagement

- Must be accessible, approachable, and right-sized
- Identifies problems that need to be solved and issues most important to the community
- Outlines a clear path of decision-making and where the public can influence outcomes
- Creates space for difficult conversations and a forum for collective problem solving



Spectrum of Public Participation

INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Addressing Barriers to Engagement

- **Language Accessibility**
- **Timing of Events**
- **Location Accessibility and Transportation Needs**
 - ADA-compliant facilities
 - In-person and virtual
 - Reachable by different modes of transit
- **Technological and Digital Accessibility**
- **Family-Friendly Environment**
- **Equitable Compensation**
- **Building Trust**



Engagement Activities

- Workshops and Open Houses
- Attend Community Events
- Guided Walks and Site Visits
- Youth Engagement
- Online or Virtual Engagement
 - Virtual Meetings
 - Online Surveys
 - Interactive Maps
 - Social Media



Building Meaningful Engagement

- Meet people where they are
- Think beyond one-time engagement
- Partner with community-based organizations, schools, faith communities, and other trusted local partners
- Support resident leadership
- Be transparent about how community input will influence decisions



Green Latinos



Pedro Hernández

Pedro Hernández

- California State Director, GreenLatinos / *Director Estatal de California, GreenLatinos*
- Editor-in-Chief, *The Ivanhoe Sol* / *Editor en Jefe, The Ivanhoe Sol*
- Former History Teacher, Laton High School / *Ex-profesor de Historia, Laton High School*

Areas of Expertise / Áreas de Especialización

- Rural Community Development / *Desarrollo Comunitario Rural*
- Conservation and Park Equity Policy / *Políticas de Conservación y Equidad en Parques*
- Civic Engagement / *Participación Cívica*
- Information Ecosystem Analysis / *Análisis del Ecosistema de Información*



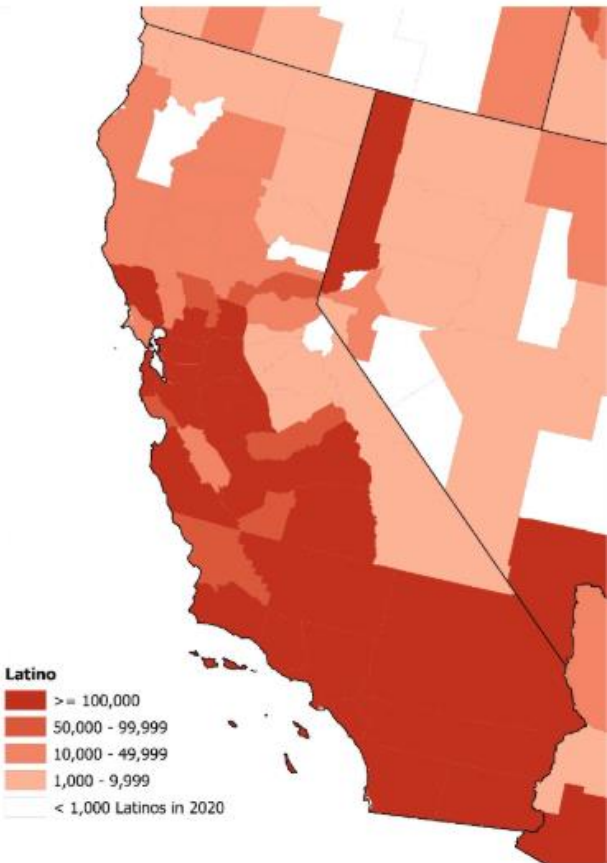
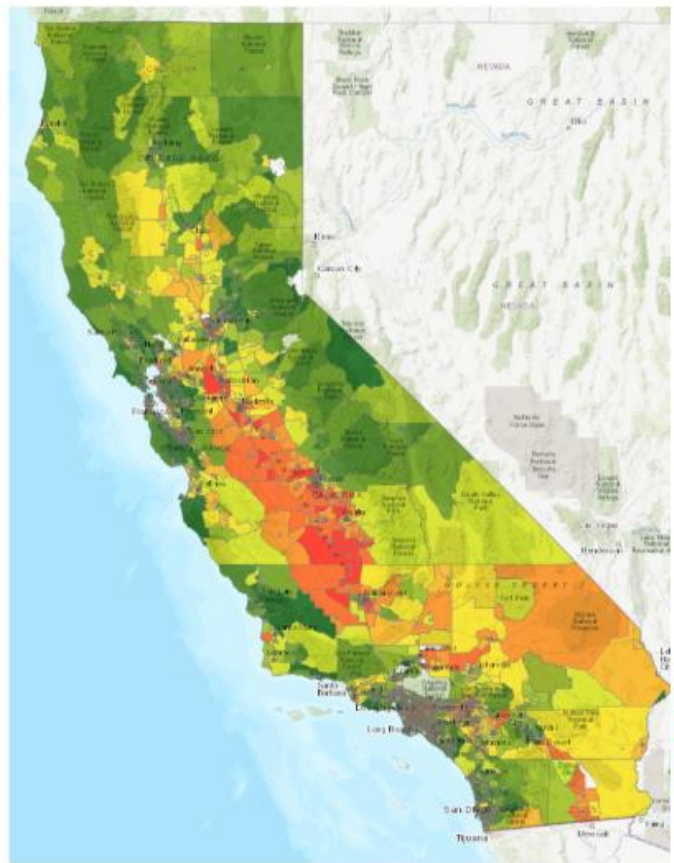
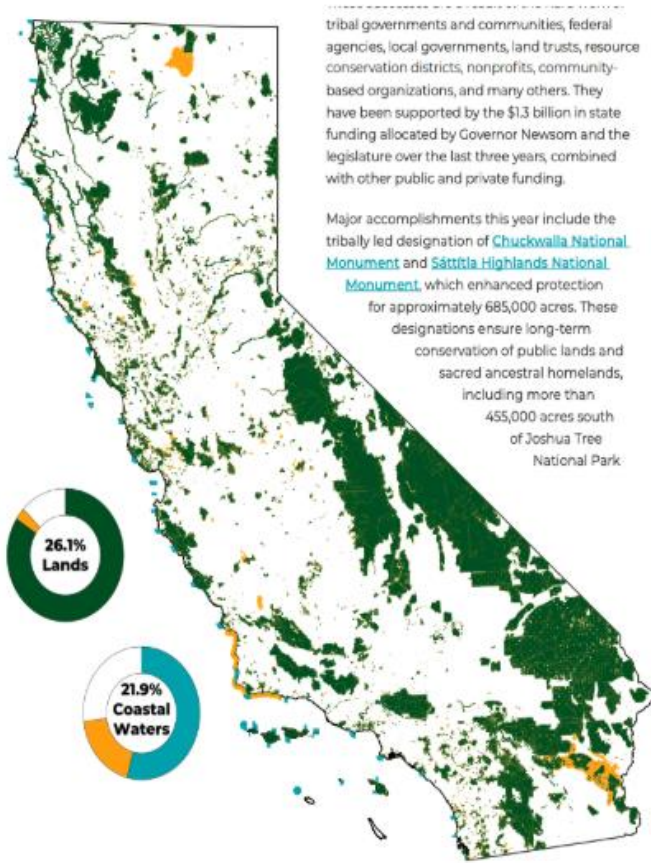
The Big Picture

California's progress on park equity is at risk. Meaningful civic engagement is essential to advancing equity, strengthening democracy, and building resilient green spaces.

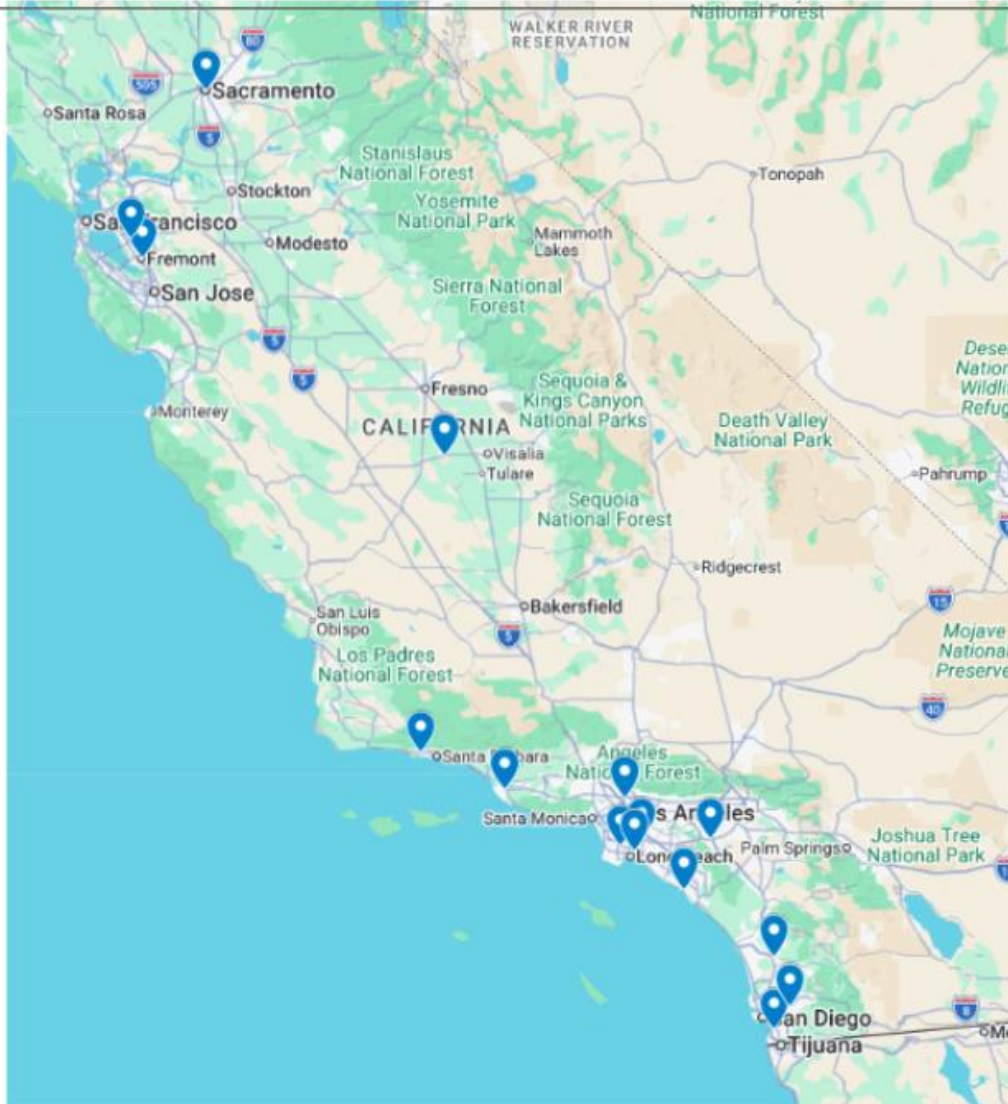
La participación cívica significativa es fundamental para promover la equidad, fortalecer la democracia y construir espacios verdes más resilientes.



Park Inequity in Context / *Desigualdad en los parques en contexto*



Partnering with Cities / Colaboración con ciudades



Partnering with Organizations / Colaboración con organizaciones



Partnering with Legislators / Colaboración con legisladoras



PRESS RELEASE

**ON EARTH DAY, SENATOR LENA GONZALEZ AND
OUTDOOR EQUITY ADVOCATES CELEBRATE SB
1268 ADVANCING TO CODIFY OUTDOORS FOR
ALL**



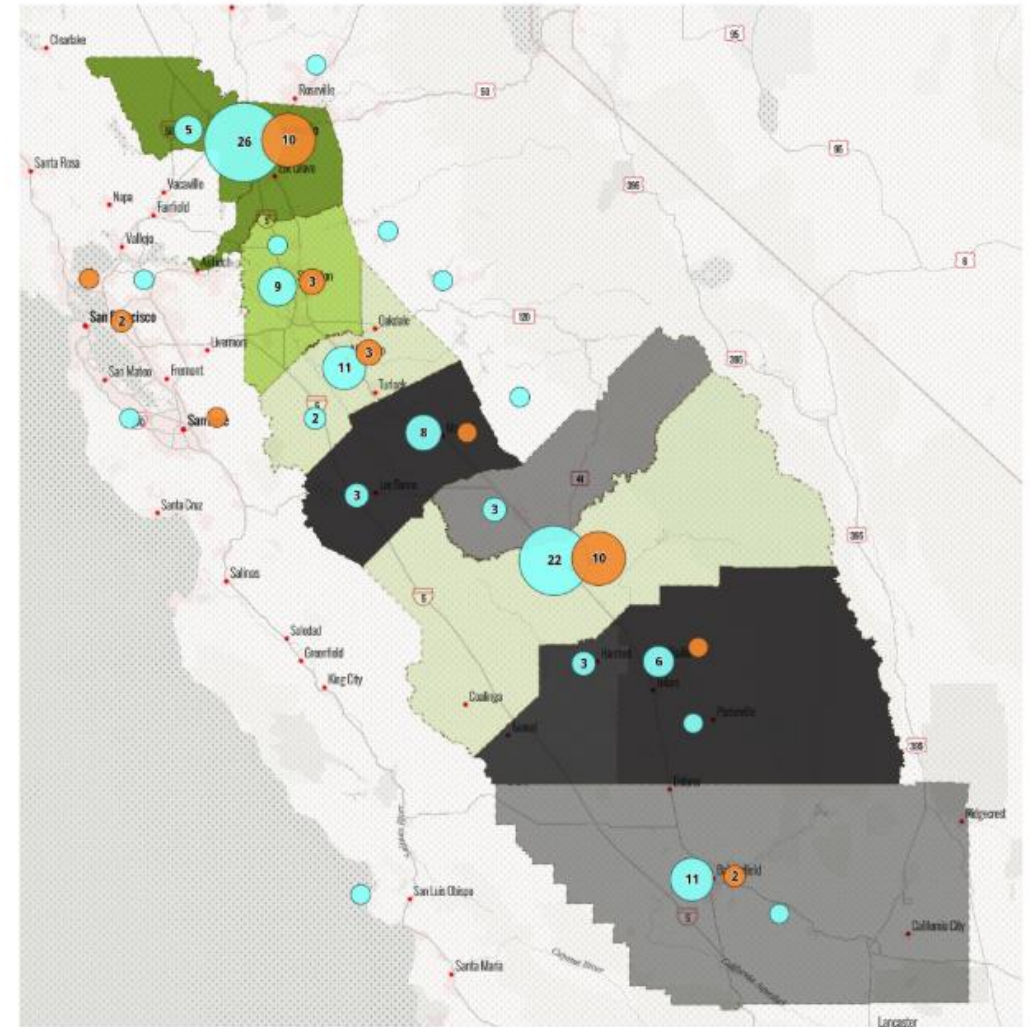
Understanding the Information Ecosystem / *Comprender el ecosistema de la información*

Where do people get their information? / ¿Dónde obtiene la gente su información?

- Online sources / *Fuentes en línea*
- Print media / *Medios impresos*
- Television / *Televisión*
- Direct mail / *Correo directo*
- Word of mouth / *De boca en boca*

What is the audience's educational background? / ¿Cuál es el nivel educativo de la audiencia?

- Consider literacy levels, language proficiency, and educational attainment when designing outreach. / *Considere los niveles de alfabetización, el dominio del idioma y el nivel educativo al diseñar estrategias de divulgación.*



Understanding the Information Ecosystem / *Comprender el ecosistema de la información*

What is the historical context? / *¿Cuál es el contexto histórico?*

- Decline of Spanish-language media / *Disminución de los medios de comunicación en español*
- Rise of misinformation and disinformation / *Aumento de la información errónea y la desinformación*



Language Justice / *Justicia lingüística*

Defined / Definido

Language Justice is a key practice used in social justice movements in order to create shared power, practice inclusion and dismantle traditional systems of oppression that have traditionally disenfranchised non-English speakers.

La justicia lingüística es una práctica clave en los movimientos de justicia social para generar poder compartido, fomentar la inclusión y dismantelar los sistemas tradicionales de opresión que históricamente han marginado a las personas que no hablan inglés.



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Consultation and Decision-Making / Consulta y toma de decisiones

During the meeting / Durante el reunion:

- Explain where the consultation fits within the overall decision-making process / *Explique en qué parte del proceso general de toma de decisiones se enmarca la consulta.*
- Set clear expectations about how community input will be used / *Establezca expectativas claras sobre cómo se utilizarán las aportaciones de la comunidad.*
- Allow time for questions and discussion / *Dedique tiempo a preguntas y conversación.*



Keeping It Real / Manteniéndolo Real

Be prepared for situations where participants may / *Esté preparado para situaciones en las que los participantes puedan:*

- Not attend / *No asistir*
- Raise issues outside the scope of the meeting / *Mencionar temas que estén fuera del alcance de la reunión*
- Leave early / *Irse antes de que termine la reunión*
- Be hesitant to trust government or institutions / *Desconfiar del gobierno o de las instituciones*
- Be affected by external events that influence participation / *Verse afectados por acontecimientos externos que influyen en la participación*



Solutions / Soluciones

- Expand community liaison staff / *Ampliar el personal de enlace comunitario*
- Recruit and retain multilingual staff / *Reclutar y retener personal multilingüe*
- Develop more sophisticated information ecosystem analyses / *Desarrollar análisis más sofisticados del ecosistema de información*
- Host multiple meetings / *Organizar múltiples reuniones*
- Collaborate with trusted organizations, institutions, and individuals / *Colaborar con organizaciones, instituciones y personas de confianza*
- Ensure materials are fully translated / *Asegurar que todos los materiales estén completamente traducidos*



Stewardship



Using TPL's On Common Ground Framework to inform stewardship

community
POWER

community
IDENTITY

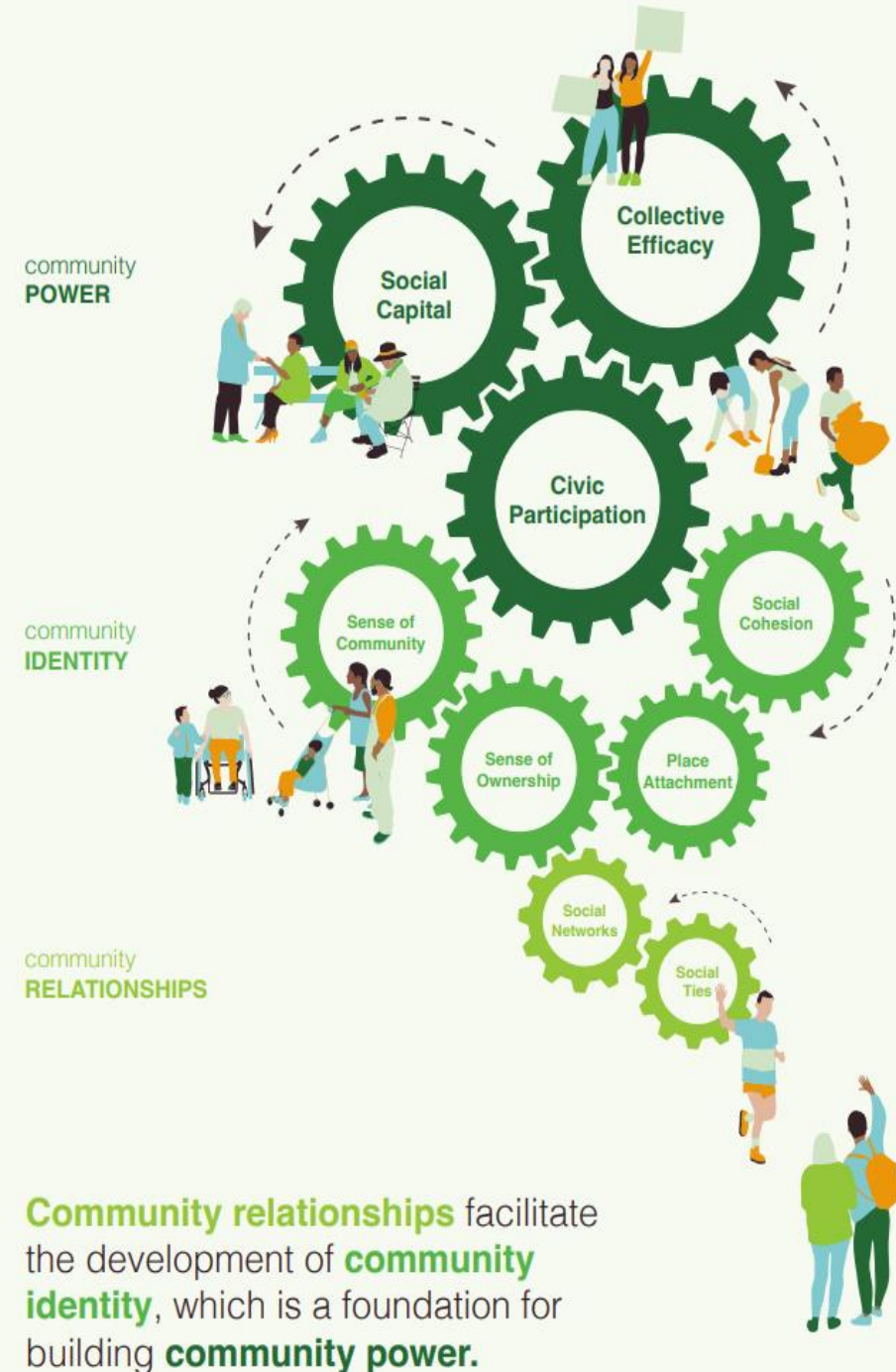
community
RELATIONSHIPS



Community relationships facilitate the development of **community identity**, which is a foundation for building **community power**.

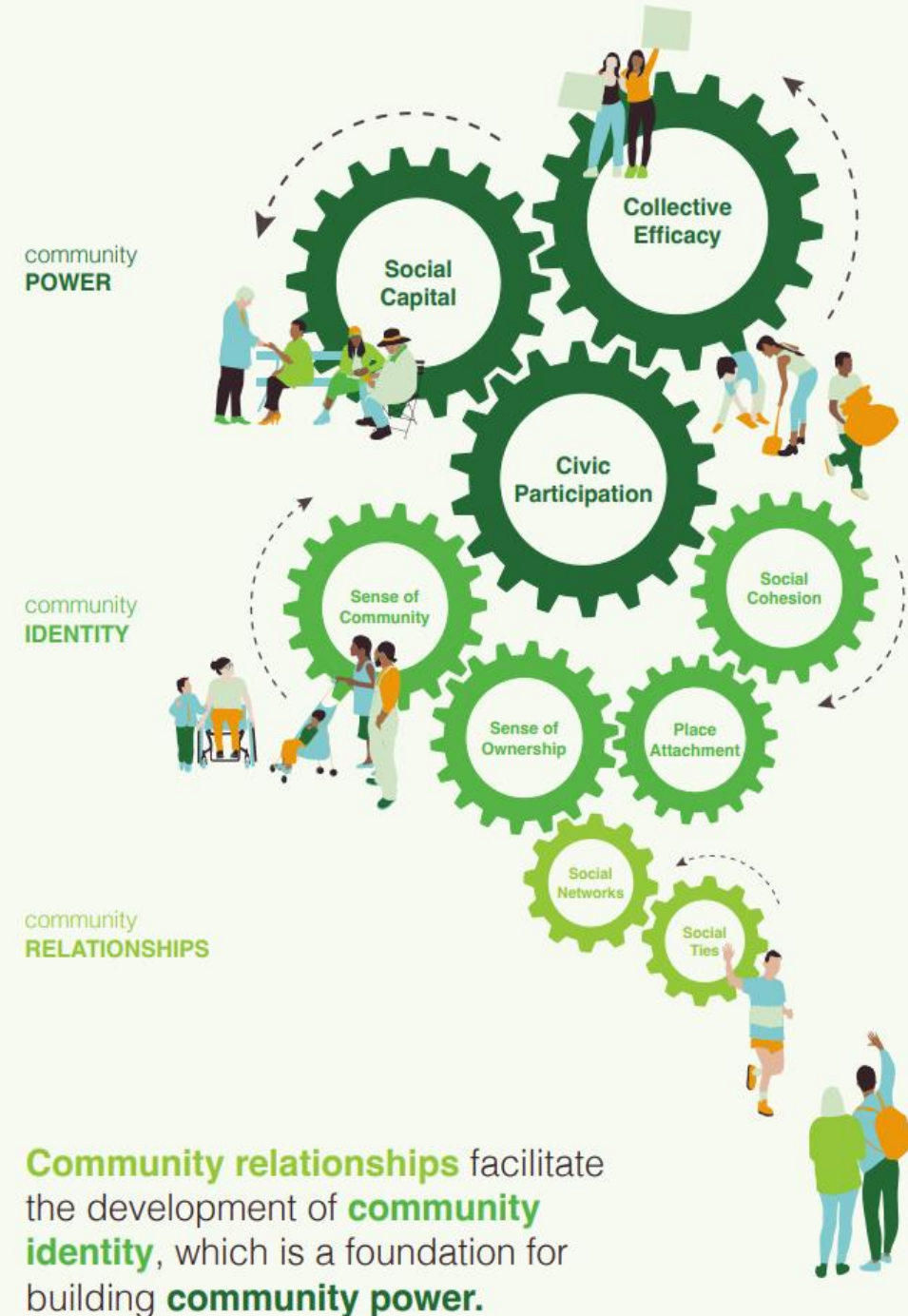
Within Parks and Open space:

- Stewardship can refer to the operation, interpretation, maintenance, and events/activities, and the governance/admin structures associated with them.
 - Physical Care: *Facilities maintenance, Equipment, signage, safety*
 - Ecological Care: *Biodiversity, Climate monitoring, habitat restoration*
 - Community Use: *Major uses, organized events, informal gatherings*
 - Governance: *Admin Structure, community representation*
 - Continuity: *Property Ownership/Site Control, Funding mechanisms*
- In my experience, stewardship is often relegated to just Operations & Maintenance, considered an afterthought or “checkbox” item to be handed off to a subcontractor in planning and project management decisions.



Ask Questions:

- *Who will do the physical work?*
- *Who Will convene/ coordinate partners and logistics?*
- *Who has authority to make decisions?*
- *Who pays for it (yearly)?*
- *What skills, equipment, and organizations must exist to achieve goals?*
- *How does the system set up respond to external changes (funding, climate, community priorities, etc)?*



Community Relationships

- **Social Ties:**
 - Friends, Colleagues, Neighbors, fellow Community members
- **Social Networks:**
 - Response systems
 - Technical Experts

Relationships will be the common thread from project ideation to delivery. They provide understanding of individual and organizational capacity/needs upfront and steady communication channels when hurdles come up down the line.



community
RELATIONSHIPS



Community relationships facilitate the development of **community identity**, which is a foundation for building **community power**.

Community Identity

- **Sense of Community:**
 - Interest groups, Volunteer events
 - *Clean ups, Friends of- groups*
- **Sense of Ownership:**
 - Participatory planning, labor/land connection, interpretation
 - *Guided Tours, Tree Plantings, Signage*
- **Place Attachment:**
 - Parks, neighborhoods, community centers & gardens, 3rd spaces
 - *Ancestral Tribal Stewards, Cultural and Historical groups, Local workforce development, parks activation events*
- **Social Cohesion:**
 - Cross-Sector Partnerships and Coalitions
 - *Stockton: Delta Aquatic Center and Mormon Slough Restoration Association coalitions*



What brings people coming back to a place or to an activity? Who feels responsible for its future?
These answers will often play a part in the stewardship conversation.

Community Power

- Civic Participation:
 - Seats on Commissions, Committees, City Councils, public comments
 - Meaningful roles, resources, knowledge, decision authority, and accountability mechanisms.
- Social Capital:
 - Shared advocacy and resources
- Collective Efficacy:
 - Healthy Communities, Ecosystems, and local economies
 - Holding Institutions accountable.

Engagement activities only build lasting stewardship when they embed long term capacity, responsibility, or authority within the project's foundation. Participation is not enough.



Takeaways

- **Social Ties and Social Networks** are the foundational building block for any forms of long-term stewardship.
- Lasting stewardship needs a functioning system of partners, personal relationships, shared responsibilities, local capacity, and reoccurring resources
- Projects with long-term visions need to maintain long-term dollars across agency priorities (special taxes, annual budgets).
- Multi-Sector, Multi-agency Partnerships can begin to fill gaps (Friends of-, DAC/ MSRA) and expand communication.
- Critical Gear, skillsets, certs, infrastructure, and facilities can be localized and intentionally supported.



Zoom Poll!

Do you need Spanish interpretation?

- Yes/Sí
- No/No



Zoom Poll!

Which topic are you interested in? / ¿Qué tema te interesa?

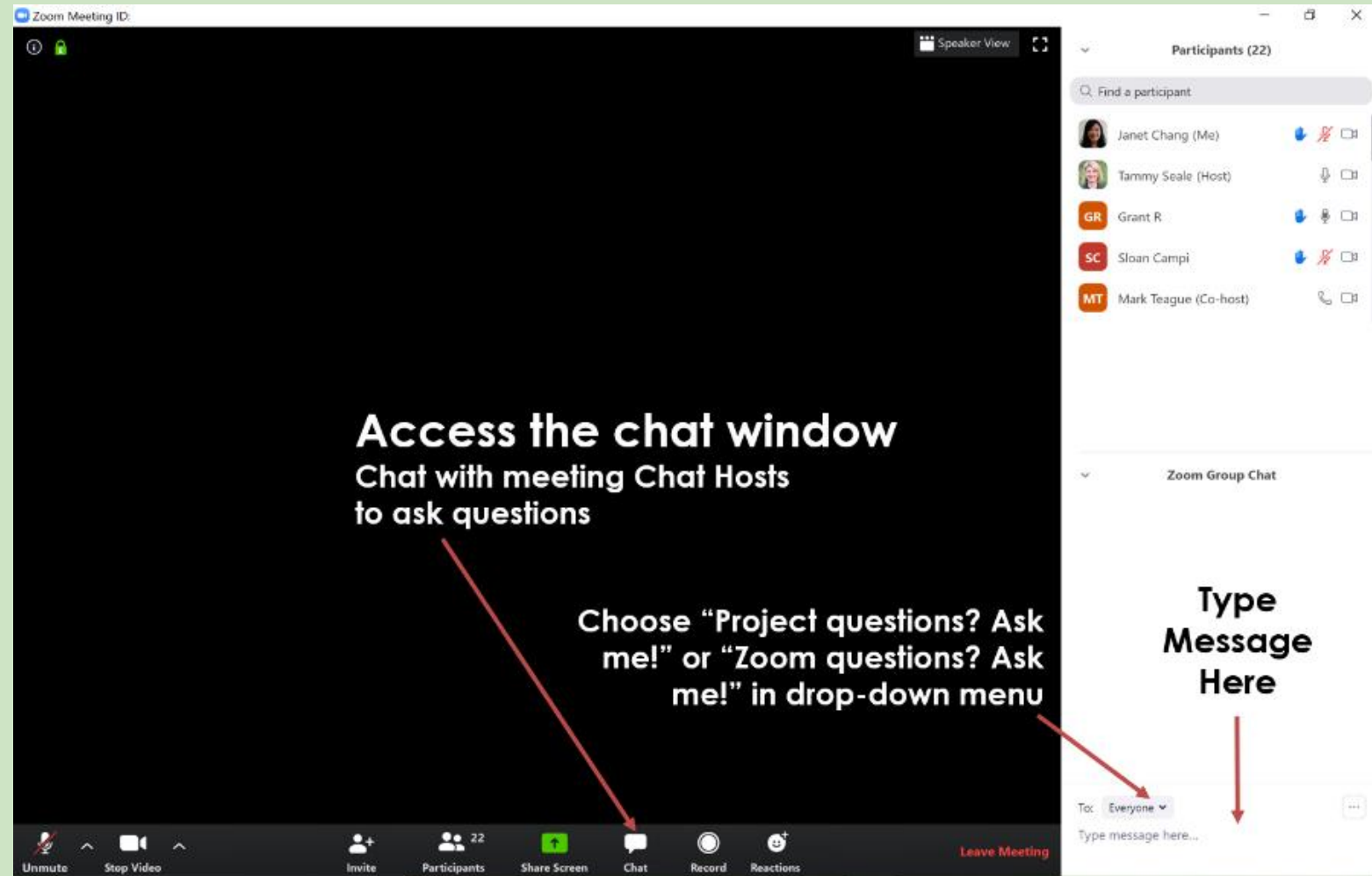
- **Community Engagement / Participación comunitaria**
- **Stewardship / Administración**



Q&A Session

Questions?

- Send your questions to **Questions? Ask me!**
- Send zoom support questions to **Zoom Questions**



Report Back to the Group



Session Survey

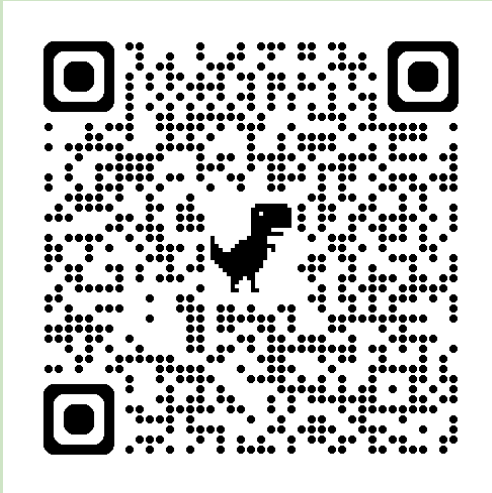
Take our survey to join the giveaway!

Scan the QR code or click the link in the chat.



Collaborative Resource List

Everyone can contribute!



- Participant sharing hub for resources.
- Share your contact information with your peers.
- Learn and share about resources.



Stay Involved! Upcoming Engagement

- **State Parks Forward**

- Three new park opportunities in Central Valley: Dust Bowl Camp, Feather River Park, San Joaquin River Parkway
- **Take the survey and spread the news!**
- Workshops coming in August
- Sign up for mailing list!



Scan the QR code
to get involved today!

parks.ca.gov/Forward



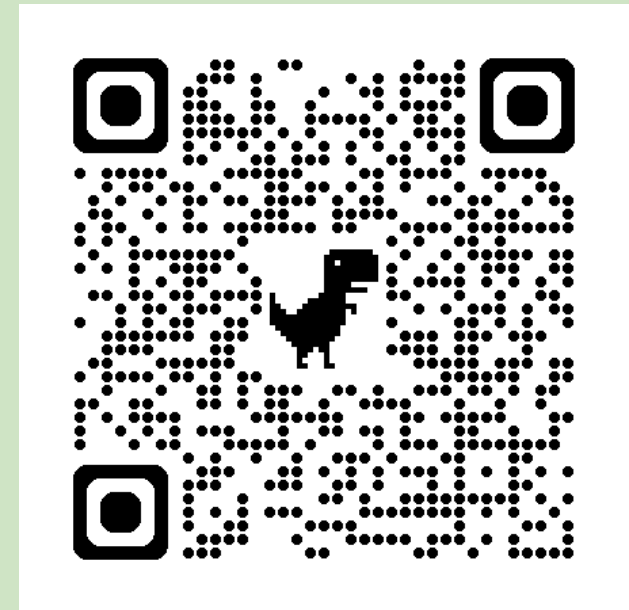
Stay Involved! Upcoming Engagement

Outdoors for All

CNRA is hosting 7 field convenings to carry forward the vision and priorities of the 2023 Outdoors For All Strategy to shape a future where more Californians can connect with the outdoors

You can choose to attend the convening that works best for you!

- San Diego: Aug 27
- Monterey: Sep 2
- Plumas County: Sep 9
- Fresno: Sep 15
- Sacramento: Sep 17
- Los Angeles: Sep 18
- Riverside: Sep 24



Scan the QR code to register!

Thank you for joining us!

Session 1: Approaches to Park Equity & Access in the Central Valley

Session 2: Funding for Parks: Creative Strategies to Increase Park Investments and Developments

Session 3: Parks as a Climate Solution: Environmental Justice and Community Resilience

Session 4: Parks as a Driver to Improve Public Health

Session 5: Community Engagement in Action

- **Total Participants: Approximately 200!**
- **Recordings available:**
<https://10minutewalk.org/communities-of-practice-central-valley/>





Thank you!

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

Since 1975, TLP has protected 6 million acres of public lands, streams, and parks, trails, riparian, and coastal resources. TLP has also been instrumental in public lands management, and continues to work on public lands issues.

To learn more, visit tlp.org.