

**OurCounty – Los Angeles Sustainability Plan
Tribal & Indigenous Communities Convening
Monday May 13, 2019
1pm – 3pm**

Notes

Welcome

- Introductions – LA County Chief Sustainability Office, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, and Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples
- Land recognition

Overview of OurCounty Discussion Draft

- The County has worked to develop a comprehensive, aspirational, long-term Sustainability Plan that will advance countywide goals and can serve as a template for cities
- To develop the plan, the County gathered input from several hundred organizations and stakeholders through a variety of workshops and events; altogether, the County received 6,000 recommendations
- The County worked with experts and consultants to synthesize the recommendations and turn them into a cohesive set of goals, strategies, and actions
- The Discussion Draft released on April 5 is organized according to the Plan's 12 intersectional and overarching goals
- The County identified multiple strategies that will help us achieve each goal, and multiple actions that we can take to advance each strategy. Altogether, the Plan contains 150 actions.
- The County is undertaking a second round of engagement – including public fairs, review sessions with organizational stakeholders, one-on-one meetings, and a City Summit in addition to this convening of tribal leaders– to gather feedback on the Discussion draft
- [See the attached document for a sample list of actions that highlight tribal and indigenous communities, shared for discussion]

Feedback

On the County's responsibility to elevate indigenous history, people, and their rights:

- The OurCounty document should acknowledge the government's role/ responsibility for the loss, trauma, displacement and disconnection experienced by indigenous people (example: Coastal Conservation EJ Guidelines)
- OurCounty should acknowledge tribal sovereignty and raise awareness of the official consultation process that is required for land use planning, for example through employee training

- The County should adopt a formal land acknowledgement and systematize the practice; in Sustainability Plan, include land acknowledgement and do not locate tribes in the past
- To counteract governmental efforts to erase indigenous history and identity, the County should acknowledge the role of the Native American Indian Commission in the Sustainability Plan and should put more people with native ancestry in positions with decision-making power

On how terminology affects implementation:

- Policies and programs that make resources available to disadvantaged communities and populations often exclude California Native American Tribes and indigenous groups by virtue of how the target populations are identified or the resources are disseminated. The County must avoid excluding these groups in the future.
- When referencing tribal and indigenous communities, the County should use consistent terminology that doesn't make these communities or their members ineligible for grant opportunities or other resources. It is important to consistently use inclusive language.
 - The CSO will work with tribal communities and the LANAIC to ensure that the sustainability plan uses consistent and appropriate terminology, for instance when it is appropriate to use California Indian Tribe vs Native Nations or Indigenous.
 - The State of CA recognizes both federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes. The California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) maintains a contact list for all California Native American Tribes. This list may be obtained by contacting the NAHC in writing and requesting the information. NAHC maintains a list of state-recognized groups that the County will share with meeting participants. These groups are referred to as "California Native American Tribes."
 - Grants and other resources should not be exclusively disseminated to or through 501c3 organizations, because not all tribes have (or are represented by) groups with nonprofit status.

On how to honor indigenous communities' relationship with the environment:

- In order to integrate the environmental management practices of indigenous people into County-supported efforts, it would be helpful to create an inventory of those practices
- County-supported habitat restoration efforts should be required to consult tribal groups
- The County should create a mechanism for citizens of California Native American Tribes on the contact list for LA County to gain free access to County-owned land for traditional practices such as harvesting and gathering; fees for things like parking or gathering should be waived.

On how people with Native ancestry are excluded or overlooked by standard County procedures:

- Native American and Indigenous Populations are often excluded from, or overlooked in standard operating procedures
- Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples are undercounted because surveys and government documents rarely include mechanisms for documenting ancestry or tribal affiliation (as distinct from race).
- Programs that allocate resources according to the levels of need among multiple sub-populations and communities often overlook Native Americans and Indigenous populations because they don't fit neatly into any racial or geographic categories. Levels of need are usually ascertained from surveys and government documents, and those levels aren't even known for Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples because of "statistical insignificance."
- Because Native Americans and Indigenous populations are undercounted and are geographically dispersed, research and assessments usually fail to document trends in their outcomes and needs.

On how County services and programs could better serve people with Native ancestry:

- The County should fund an assessment to get a better picture of the overall needs of California Native American Tribes with ancestral territories in L.A. County and Indigenous communities based in LA.
- To counteract low average education and employment levels among indigenous groups, the County should dedicate more educational and workforce development resources (such as scholarships) to them
- Tribal-owned businesses should be eligible for SBE designation, and the County should offer trainings to get these businesses registered as vendors

Closing Remarks

- If tribes want to engage with OurCounty after the public comment period, the Chief Sustainability Office welcomes opportunities to meet.