

## **A Series Overall Key Takeaways**



### **Cross Workshop Recommendation Highlights**

#### **1. Enhance Community Involvement in Planning, Funding & Policy**

- a. Require agencies to integrate more robust community engagement into project planning.
  - i. Community involvement should be a priority, funded at the onset of the project, not an afterthought.
  - ii. Rather than calling in the community to single department events, have space for all departments to be present

#### **2. Improve Data Collection & Transparency**

- a. Support community-driven data collection efforts and ensure their validity is recognized in policymaking.
- b. Redefining “trusted” data; data collected by the community often not seen as viable at the state/federal level.

#### **3. Coordinate Across Agencies & Reduce Silos**

- a. Establish cross-agency systems to focus on multi-benefit projects.
- b. County point person at different agencies to liaise with the community.
- c. Intentional collaboration across the community, government, agencies, and businesses.

#### **4. Proactive Planning**

- a. Infrastructure and maintenance identified as most significant hurdles to being reactive versus proactive in terms of advancing climate goals and being responsive to climate disasters
- b. Having holistic approaches to linking climate resilience and sustainability within funding and implementation programs

#### **5. Funding Practices**

- a. Participatory Budgeting, localized funding models for local projects
- b. Prioritizing maintenance in budgets
- c. Ensuring the community is involved in planning/funding stages, and outreach is a prioritized budget item
- d. Carbon taxing
- e. Polluter Pay Principles and Practices

#### **6. Uplift Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Native Practices**

- a. Following indigenous ways of soil remediation, plantings around transportation sites, and looking to Native partners during all stages of project planning and implementation.

- b. Changing codes related to cultural burns as they are not currently permitted

## **7. Increase Public Awareness & Education on Existing Programming and Resources**

- a. One-stop shop for resource and education dissemination

## **8. Changes to Local Gov't Structures/Process**

- a. Reducing funding barriers for local organizations to access grants
- b. Changes in term limits to allow for scalable change
- c. Establish leadership training programs to educate elected officials on local environmental challenges.
  - i. Community senses a disconnect between elected officials and community experiences.

## **9. Partner with LAUSD**

- a. Expanding impact by creating thoughtful partnerships with LAUSD and expanding the access of benefits to nearby communities

### **What stands out? What may be a new area to explore?**

- 1. Hydrogen
- 2. County as Technical Assistance Provider
- 3. Coastal Restoration
- 4. Funding for Fire/Forest Resilience
- 5. Healthy Soils
- 6. Values principles/cultural shift around climate resilience, environmental justice, and green economy

### **Cross-Cutting Themes**

High-level takeaways tied to the three lenses of focus that will be further assessed in Workshop B

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### **Environmental Justice**

#### **1. Remediation & Polluted Lands**

- a. Addressing contamination at legacy pollution sites (Del Amo, gas stations, freeway-adjacent lands).
- b. Calls for corporate accountability—polluters should fund environmental restoration projects.
- c. Concerns about housing developments near freeways and oil drilling sites; need for clearer, science-based zoning policies.
- d. Ensuring green infrastructure projects are maintained long-term, rather than one-time efforts.

#### **2. Equitable Infrastructure & Social Resilience**

- a. Calls for community-centered urban planning rather than top-down decision-making.
  - b. Issues with county and city funding processes—too complex for small orgs, leaving communities out of decision-making.
  - c. Need for social infrastructure (community centers, public restrooms, hygiene stations, cooling centers).
  - d. Public spaces should be designed for dignity—hygiene is a human right.
  - e. Equitable funding of energy infrastructure as well as education on new technologies, such as hydrogen
3. **Air & Water Quality**
- a. Call for more community-driven air monitoring.
  - b. Expanding access to clean water and stormwater management solutions (rainwater capture, permeable pavement).
  - c. Concerns about lead contamination and poor drainage in some neighborhoods.
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## Green Economy

4. **Localizing the Green Economy**
- a. Community organizations should be involved in the stewardship of sustainability projects.
  - b. Local hiring and workforce development—ensuring economic benefits of sustainability projects stay within the community.
  - c. Opportunities for green workforce development in remediation, electrification, stormwater infrastructure, maintenance, urban greening, and composting/waste diversion.
  - d. More long term funding for decentralized projects—rather than billion-dollar centralized infrastructure, invest in neighborhood-scale solutions.
  - e. Contractor certification, upskilling, capacity building for growing needs in the environmental sector
  - f. Uplifting the youth via leadership development and creating pathways to sit in roles in nonprofit, government, and industry sectors
5. **Housing & Anti-Displacement Strategies**
- a. Tenant protections and closing loopholes in housing policies (e.g., “substantial remodel” evictions).
  - b. Concerns about loss of community identity in new developments—affordable housing shouldn’t contribute to gentrification.
  - c. Calls for stronger rent control enforcement and affordability mandates.
  - d. Interest in social housing—permanently affordable, community-supported housing.
  - e. Importance of multi-generational and mixed-use housing models.
6. **Decarbonization & Utility Affordability**
- a. The high cost of home electrification—funding needed to help low-income households transition.

- b. Barriers to accessing clean energy rebates (complex applications, eligibility restrictions).
  - c. Need for rate reform and advocacy at the utilities commission level.
  - d. Provide technical assistance to smaller cities and community-based organizations.
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## **Climate Resilience**

### **7. Sustainable Mobility & Active Transportation**

- a. Expanding multi-use bike and pedestrian lanes to promote alternative transit.
- b. E-bike incentives (Santa Monica's \$2000 vouchers) empower low-income communities to reduce reliance on cars.
- c. Frustrations with Metro's funding and planning process—community projects struggle to access transportation dollars.
- d. Green alleyways and public park takeovers have potential but get stuck with red tape.
- e. Calls for increased urgency in implementing transit projects, especially ahead of the 2028 Olympics.

### **8. Urban Greening & Heat Resilience**

- a. Expanding tree planting and green infrastructure, particularly in heat-vulnerable communities.
- b. Schools as hubs for green projects (shade trees, native plants, permeable pavement).
- c. Concerns about vegetation removal post-wildfires and the need to balance fire prevention with cooling benefits.
- d. Strengthening fire debris management to protect water and air quality.
- e. Rebuilding sustainably to increase resilience and be proactive rather than reactive.
- f. Expanding cool roofs/pavements as a mitigation strategy.
- g. Ensuring coastal resilience plans are promoting equitable beach access.

### **9. Disaster Preparedness & Community Resilience Hubs**

- a. Air quality monitoring needs to be more localized and community-accessible.
  - b. Need for "resilience hubs" (libraries, churches, community centers) to serve as permanent resources, not just emergency shelters.
    - i. Questions around defining "resilience"
    - ii. Ensuring resilience hubs are tailored to local needs—some residents (e.g., undocumented workers) may not feel safe in certain locations.
  - c. Infrastructure disparities in disaster recovery—some communities rebuild faster than others.
  - d. More access to air filters and climate-adaptive retrofits for older homes.
  - e. Partnering with LAUSD
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## **Barriers to Implementation**

1. **Funding Access:** CBOs and small orgs struggle to access sustainability funds due to complex applications and bureaucratic hurdles. Programmatic costs in disadvantaged communities can run higher given the level of need. For example, poor roofs with solar installation.
  2. **Interagency Coordination:** Lack of communication between city departments slows down implementation (e.g., transportation and housing not aligning).
  3. **Political Will & Public Awareness:** Need stronger leadership to push for ambitious reforms and better community education on sustainability issues.
  4. **Long Timelines:** Many public projects take over a decade to implement—calls for faster action on infrastructure, transit, and housing.
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## Opportunities for Progress

1. **Leverage the 2028 Olympics:** Use the event to push permanent investments in public transit, housing, and green infrastructure.
  2. **Participatory Budgeting:** Shift funding models to be more community-driven rather than top-down.
  3. **Multi-Benefit Projects:** Ensure projects provide environmental, economic, and social benefits (e.g., combining tree planting with job training).
  4. **Decentralized Resilience Strategies:** Invest in neighborhood-scale solutions (localized water capture, energy microgrids, hyperlocal food systems).
  5. **Holistic Housing & Transit Planning:** Rethink zoning and parking minimums, support dense, walkable, and affordable communities.
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### Findings from Dot Activities

1. Capturing and treating stormwater
2. Measure W is great, but it does not train city workers in implementation and outreach
3. Preserving access to beaches and ensuring coastal resilience, with an eye on vulnerability
4. Public transit connecting people to beaches, such as a bike path from Downtown LA to beach
5. Trash inceptor to prevent trash from entering the ocean from stormwater
6. Need a focus on food deserts
7. Lack of support to help maintain community garden space
8. Creating space for community cohesion
9. Creating food donation centers and LA composting centers
10. Add Farmers Markets near places of transits and teaming up with clinics to support health and access
11. Department silos slow progress

12. Keeping community at the center of equitable planning
13. Sustaining and funding organizations working in this space is more effective and efficient
14. Amplify indigenous voices
15. Leveraging marketing money for local food production and improving systems
16. Microgrants for urban agriculture and priming urban agriculture incentive zones
17. Created hub spaces for daily resilience and following climate disasters
18. Market match at farmers markets and uplifting food programs
19. Rezoning contaminated lands
20. Collaboration on groundwater recharge
21. Soil remediation, trusted testing, and education
22. LA living school yards and removing asphalt

# OurCounty Plan Update



## **A-1 Specific**

### **Green/Blue Space & Food - Ecosystems, Parks, Waterways and Coastlines, Food Systems and Food Waste**

Wednesday, March 5 · 1:00 – 4:00 pm  
Japanese American Cultural & Community Center

#### **Workshop Overview**

1. To spur connection between cross-sectoral leaders from across LA County
2. To understand what progress has looked like to regional leaders over the past five years
3. To listen for potential strategies and actions that can strengthen the OurCounty Plan
4. To value people's perspectives and encourage their continued participation in Workshop B
5. To (re-)orient people to the OurCounty Plan

#### **Topic Summaries**

##### **1. Biodiversity**

1. Need for local groundwater recharge to enhance biodiversity and reduce reliance on imported water.
2. Protection of wildlife corridors is essential for maintaining plant and animal interconnectivity. Suggestions include having micro corridors with pollinators in urban areas.
3. Education and policy integration are necessary to protect existing habitats from development.
4. Combat invasive species, which threaten biodiversity and require significant resources to remove.
5. Balancing housing development and green space.
6. Mapping biodiversity corridors can help track progress and inform decision-making. Need a stronger data argument especially for ecosystems and biodiversity health.
7. Data collection and accessibility are critical for securing funding and demonstrating the value of ecosystem services.

##### **2. Park Access**

1. Many parks lack basic amenities like restrooms, shade, lighting, and programming, leading to underuse.
2. Maintenance funding is insufficient, resulting in parks falling into disrepair.
3. Need for multi-benefit projects that incorporate green space into urban development.
4. Communities often lack information on available park resources and amenities.
5. The vision for an ideal park includes safety, accessibility, pet-friendly spaces, lighting, and programming.
6. Park planning must involve community-led design and ongoing engagement, not just a top-down vision. Opportunities to include the youth in this process and create a strong connection to nature.

### **3. Sustainable Recovery After Wildfires**

1. Concerns over fire-related waste disposal in impacted communities like Sylmar.
2. Above-ground powerlines pose a fire risk, requiring a shift toward resilient infrastructure.
3. Using post-fire debris for ecological restoration instead of discarding it could be beneficial.
4. Need for community hubs to facilitate gathering and recovery after disasters.
5. Forest bond resilience is a new model of investing that quantifies the benefits of these solutions.
6. Need a collaborative on tribal engagement in discussions on prevention and our rebuilding response.
7. Updating fire standards to be defensible to the environment.

### **4. Local Food Production**

1. Community gardens often lack irrigation support and maintenance funding, relying on volunteers.
2. Policy barriers (e.g., lack of food donation infrastructure for SB1383 compliance) prevent food from being redirected to those in need, including schools.
3. Restaurants with excess food could help, but there is no streamlined system for donation and infrastructure to facilitate this.
4. Education is crucial—even people with food access may lack time, resources, or knowledge of resources.
5. Promoting pathways to land ownership, long term lease agreements, and rezoning for food sovereignty.

### **4. Soil Health**

1. Potential for composting programs to improve soil health, but access to composting infrastructure is limited.
2. Need for better use of organic waste to enrich soil rather than contributing to landfills.
3. Toxic site remediation via natural, safe processes and not by use of further chemicals
4. Mistrust by the community when a site is deemed ‘safe.’

### **4. Coastal Waterways**

1. Measure W was designed to improve stormwater capture and water quality, but some communities (e.g., Long Beach) haven't seen benefits.
2. Concerns over coastal erosion, sea level rise, and loss of beach access, requiring future planning.
3. Public transit gaps make beach access inequitable, especially for low-income communities.
4. Trash and safety issues along waterways and bike paths (e.g., Griffith Park to the river).
5. Pilot projects like the marina's trash interceptor have shown promise in improving water quality.
6. Education on stormwater systems and water conservation is lacking in public schools.

### **Key Themes**

1. Increasing storm water capture systems
2. Funding for maintenance

3. Creating spaces for community cohesion and ensuring long-term funding for its continuation
4. Considerations around building and de-building, for example, depaving efforts
5. Promoting local development and distribution as it relates to supporting local food
6. Ensuring indigenous voices are heard