

Shaping California's Future: General Plan Guidelines Visioning Workshop (pt. 2)

California American Planning Association Conference
September 30, 2025



☆LCI Planning
Guidelines Update

The State Clearinghouse

Mission: Support informed decision-making by public agencies & the public

Roles

- CEQA implementation
- Local & regional land use planning
- Environmental Goals & Policy Report

Provide

- Written guidance
- Tech tools & resources



Overview of LCI's Planning Activities



Agenda

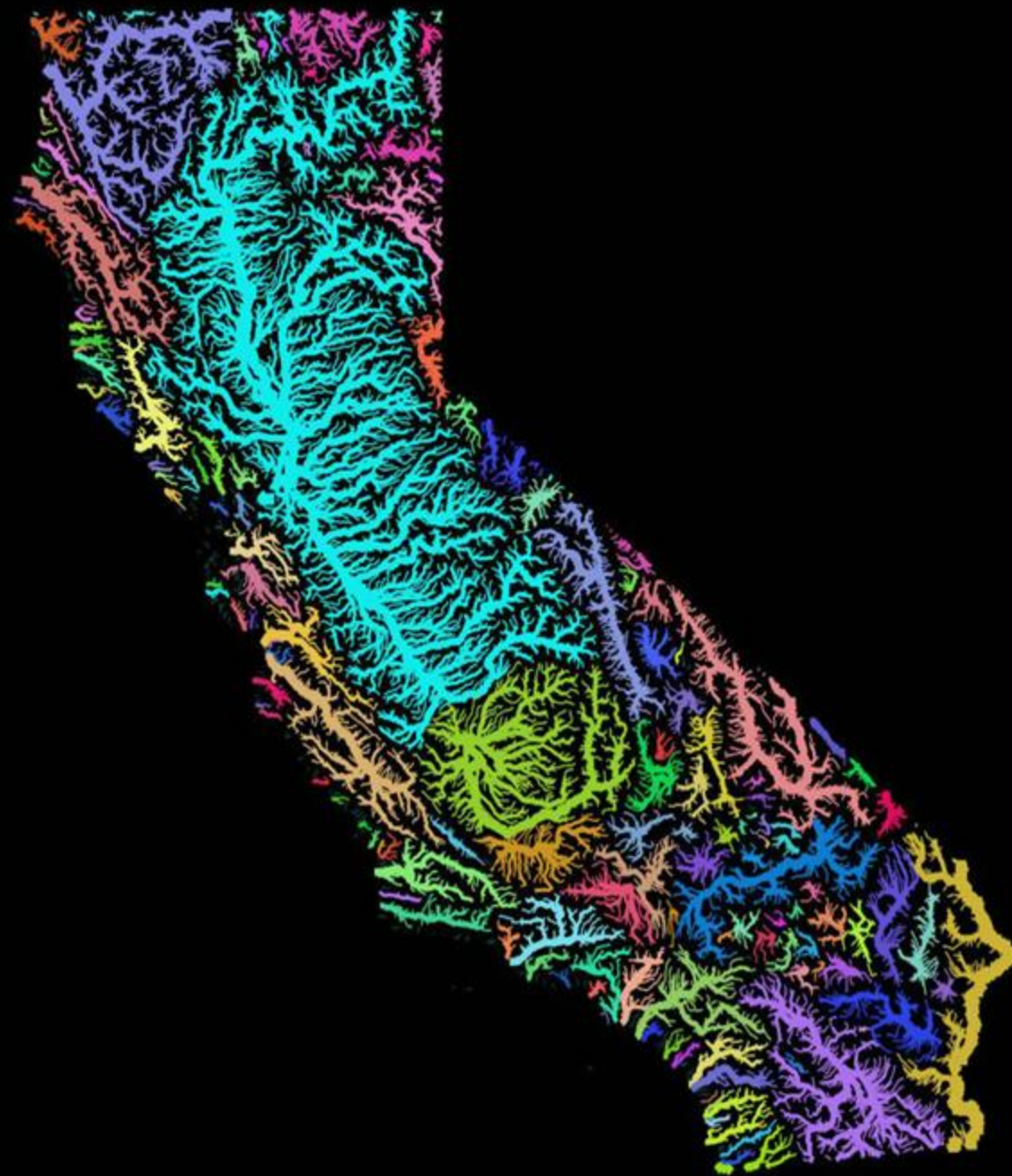
- Presentation
 - Lawrence Grodeska presents *"An Introduction to Bioregions and Bioregionalism"*
 - LCI Planning Guidelines Update Overview
- Breakout Groups
 - Introductions
 - Discussion
 - Feedback

Bioregions and Bioregionalism



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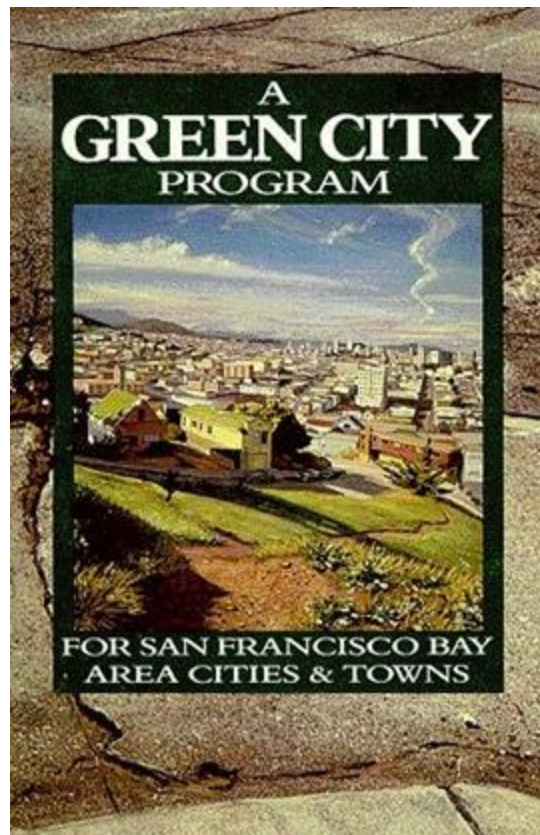
Bioregions

“Bio-cultural regions” reflect natural boundaries, such as watersheds, mountain ranges, or ecological zones, rather than abstract political borders.

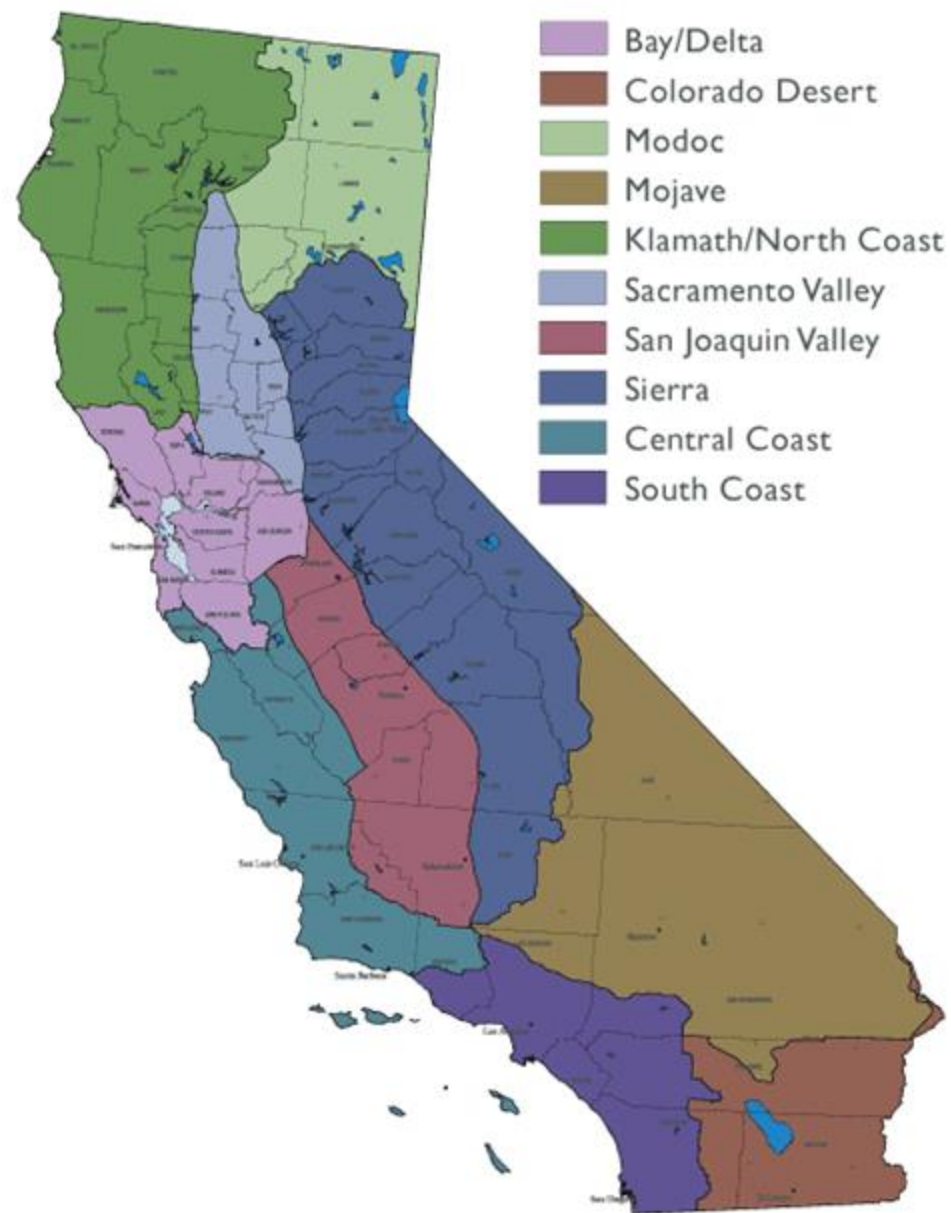
The concept of bioregion emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life in a place, and promotes the idea that human communities should adapt their lifestyles and practices to align with the specific ecological characteristics of their bioregion.

Bioregionalism

Bioregionalism is a philosophy that connects people and ideas into place, which work watershed by watershed, in ways that are sustainable, democratic and just.



BIOREGIONS of CALIFORNIA

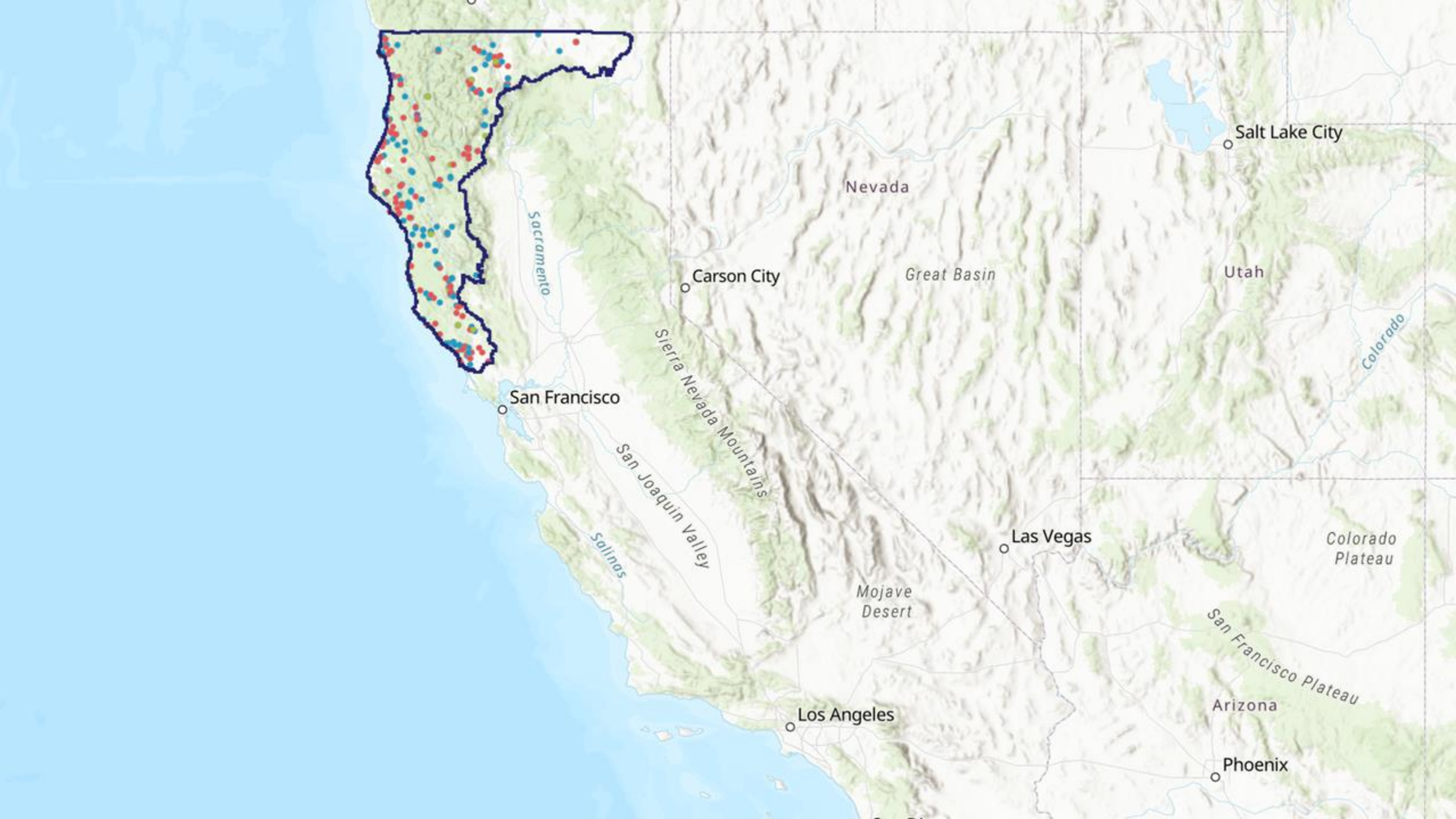




Example: North Coast Resource Partnership

NCRP promotes collaborative, integrated planning and project implementation, investing over \$120 million in hundreds of projects that benefit the North Coast Region's communities and watersheds.

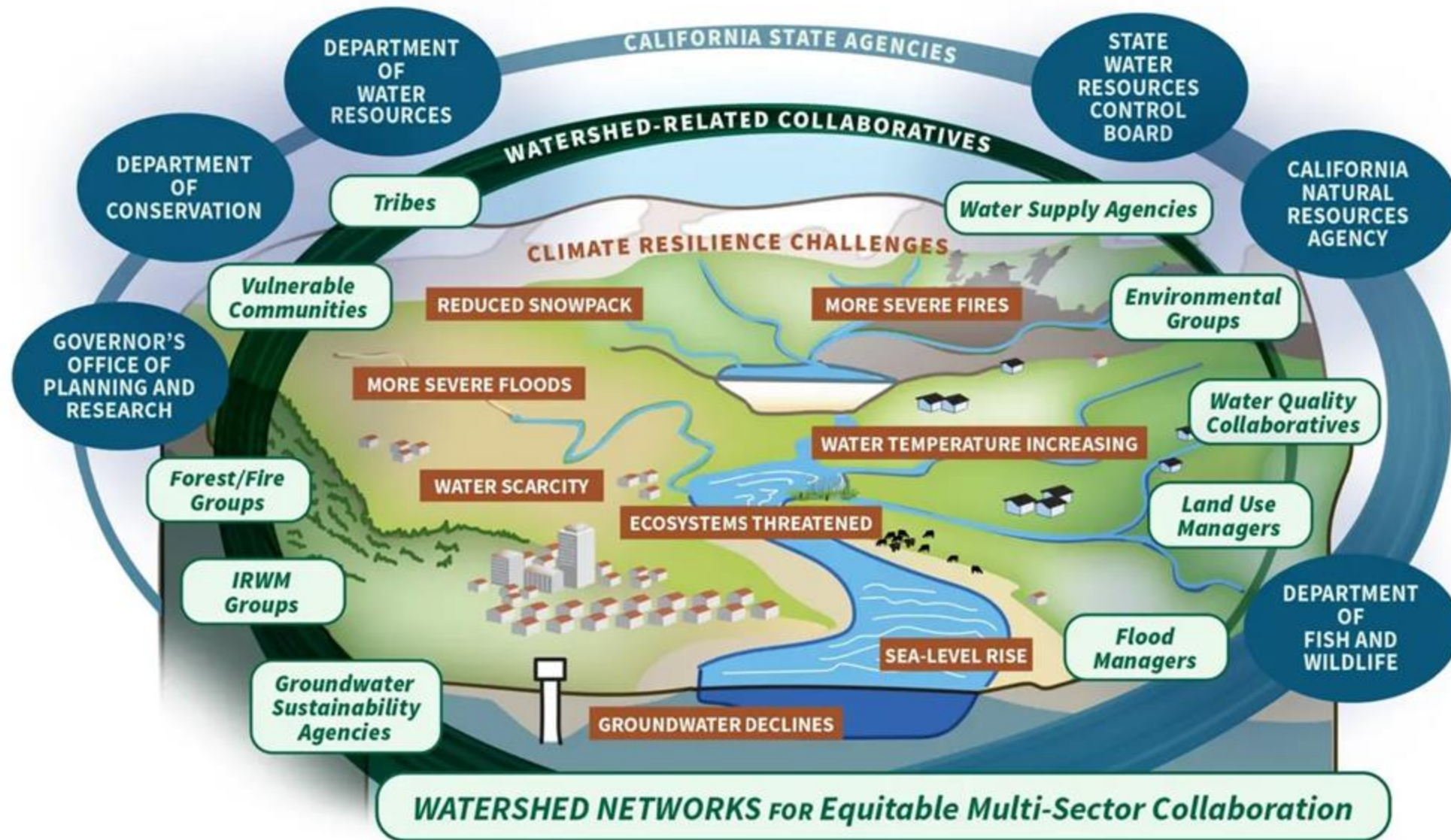
The NCRP places a strong emphasis on local autonomy, leadership by locally elected Tribal and county representatives, the enhancement of natural and working landscapes, and resolution of failing water and wastewater infrastructure.



Example: California Water Plan Update 2023

The **Watershed Resilience Framework** serves as a roadmap for the State and regions to carry out climate resilience planning, managing water from headwaters to outflow at a watershed scale

This approach prioritizes analyzing climate risks and adaptation at the watershed level and collaborating across water, flood, forest/fire, ecosystem, and land use sectors



Credit: California Department of Water Resources

Bioregional Planning Scenarios

Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity

Wildlife corridors, migration routes, and ecosystems cross dozens of jurisdictions, but Open Space Elements are planned in isolation.

Wildfire Prevention and Resilience

Wildfire does not respect jurisdictional boundaries, yet forest stewardship, evacuation planning, and building codes are set jurisdiction by jurisdiction.

Agricultural Land Preservation and Working Landscapes

Soil health, irrigation districts, and agricultural economies function regionally, but land conversion decisions happen parcel by parcel.

Helping people and cultures ... develop and express their own capacity to solve their own problems, consistent with their own needs and with the ecosystems around them.

- Donella Meadows

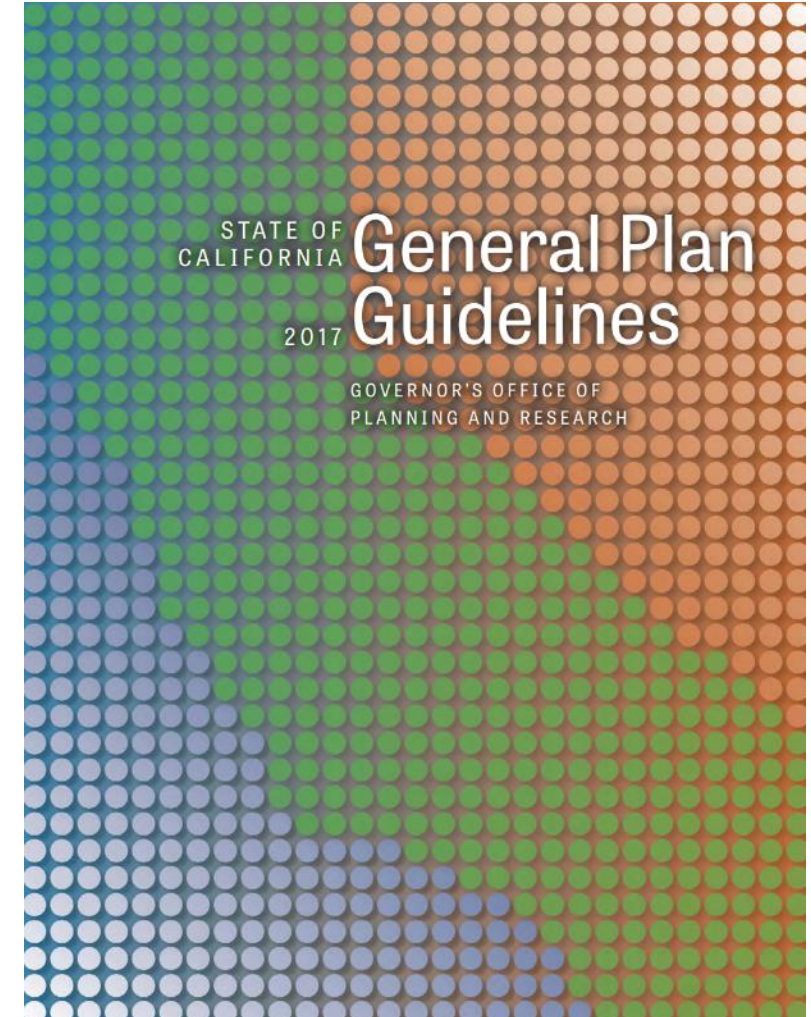
LCI Planning Guidelines Update Overview



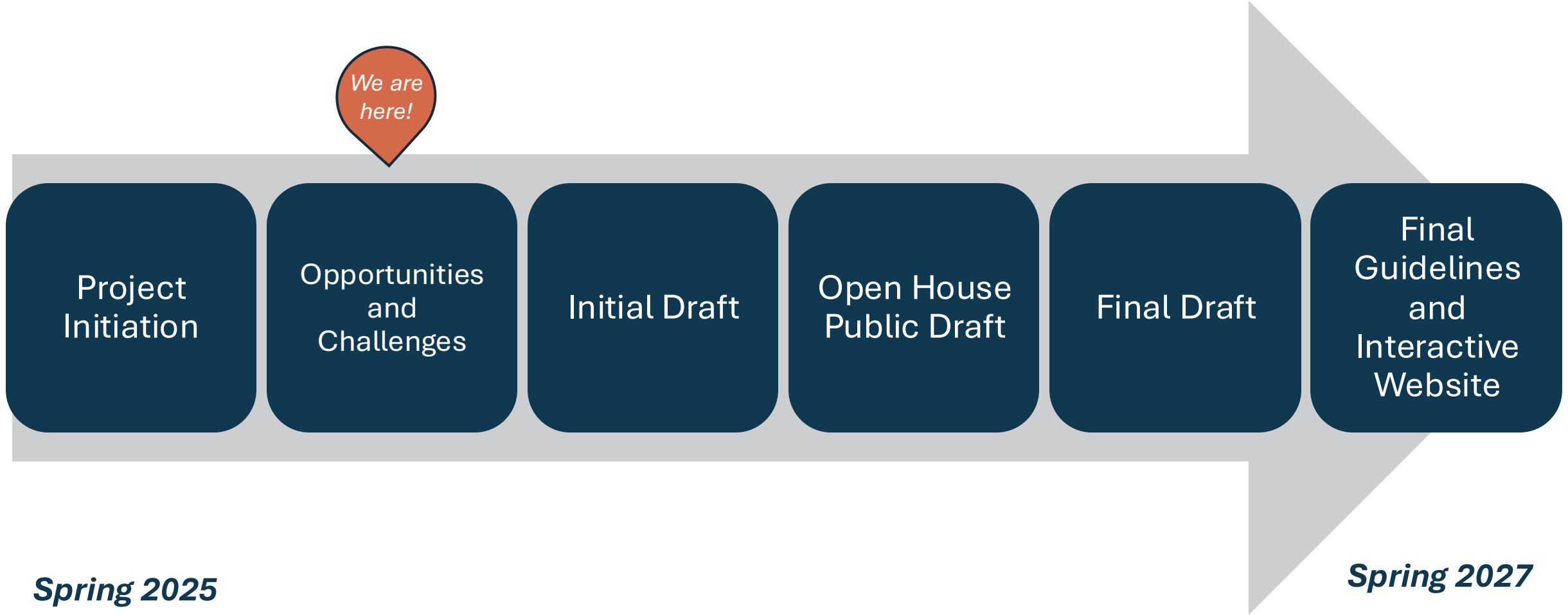
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Project Components

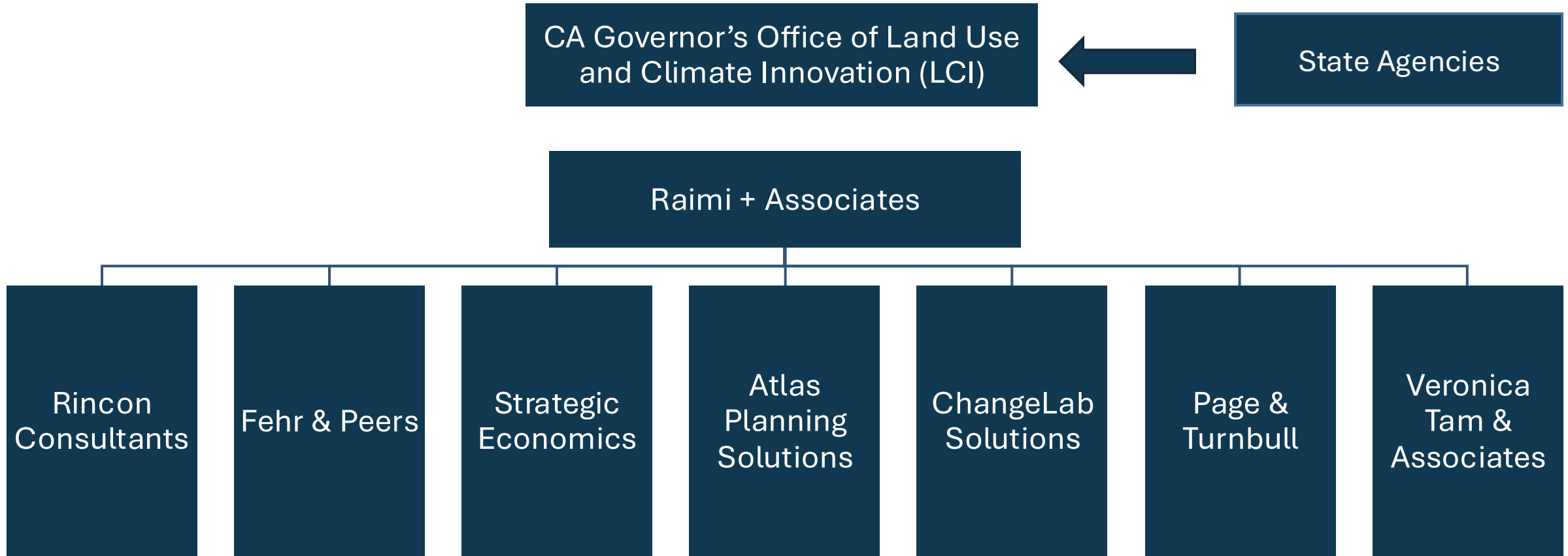
- Comprehensive updates to:
 - General Plan Guidelines (excluding Housing)
 - Planner's Guide to Specific Plans
 - Tribal Consultation Guidelines
- An interactive project website
- Complete by March 2027



LCI Planning Guidelines Timeline



General Plan and Specific Plan Guidelines Team



Planning Guidelines Updates Topics

- 9 Required Elements
- Additional Topics/Elements
 - Historic Preservation
 - Water
 - Economic Development
 - Urban Design and Placemaking
 - Agriculture and Working Lands
- Cross Cutting Topics
 - Climate Adaptation and Resilience
 - Tribal Knowledge
 - Equity and Health
 - Community Engagement



Engagement Activities

- Project Launch Workshops *(complete!)*
- Informal Listening Sessions *(complete!)*
- Topic-specific Advisory Groups *(meeting 1 complete!)*
- In-person and virtual workshops *(round 1 complete!)*
- Online surveys and feedback forms
- Tribal Consultation and Tribal Community engagement
- Environmental Justice Community engagement
- State Interagency Advisory Group *(2 meetings complete!)*
- California APA Conference ★

General Content Objectives and Approach



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Structure and Organization

- Focus on practice, “how-to” guidance
- Clear and easy to navigate
- PDF and web-based Guidelines
 - PDF = Streamlined and focused on requirements
 - Web = Dynamic and interactive with searchable databases
- Guidance for California’s diversity: geography, political, community size
- Separate chapters on required and optional topics with consistent structure

Chapter Content

- Descriptions of legal requirements and State laws
- Checklists for legal conformance
- “How to” instructions for required analysis (e.g., DAC analysis for EJ, evacuation analysis in Safety, no net loss analysis for Land Use)
- Case studies and examples
- Data and resources
- Cross-cutting themes in all chapters
- Alignment with State, regional and local plans

Implementation and Process

- Process of updating each Element (existing conditions, policy review, policy development, plan writing, etc.)
- Guidance on clear GP language
- RFP examples
- Scopes of work for focused and comprehensive updates
- Guidance on plan writing
- KPIs and plan evaluation
- Post-adoption implementation – tools and guidance

Small Group Discussions

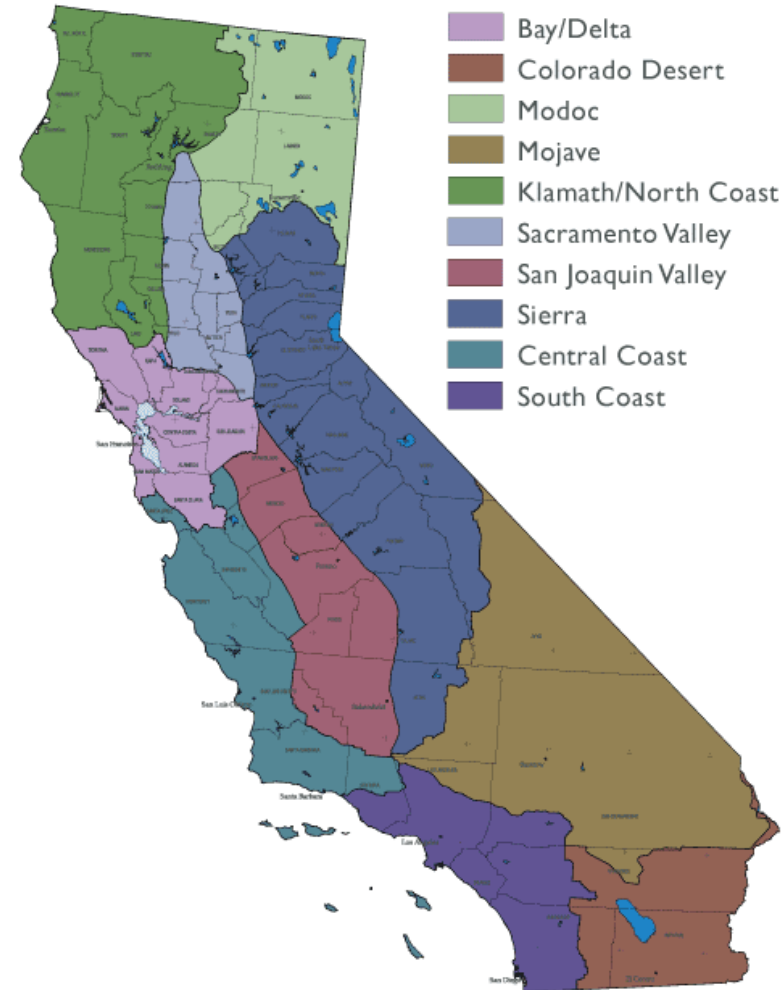


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Table Topics

- Bay-Delta
- Colorado Desert
- Modoc
- Mojave
- Klamath/North Coast
- Sacramento Valley
- San Joaquin Valley
- Sierra
- Central Coast
- South Coast

BIOREGIONS of CALIFORNIA



Small Group Discussions

- What are some innovative and promising practices you've seen or heard about in your bioregion that you are excited about for:
 - Engaging the community and helping them do long-range visioning work?
 - Achieving public health and equity goals?
 - Incorporating tribal knowledge into General Plans?
 - Addressing the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for future climate hazards?
- What are your region's assets/strengths in terms of long-range planning?
- What are the planning challenges in your region/area?

Stay Involved!



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Stay Involved!

Visit the project website for more information:

planningupdate.lci.ca.gov/

Reach out to the LCI Planning Guidelines Update team (planningupdate@lci.ca.gov) with any questions about the project!



Fill out the interest form to stay up to date on the project!

Thank you!



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