# Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards

**Guideline Development Workshop #3**

March 7, 2023. 9:30am-11:00am

# Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards Program

$149 million was established in the FY 22/23 State Budget to plan for and fund the conversion of key underutilized highways in the State into multi-modal corridors to reconnect communities divided by transportation infrastructure.



The proposed Green TI, parkland served by a small road, would replace a mile of the Terminal Island Freeway in Long Beach, California. Meléndez/CNU
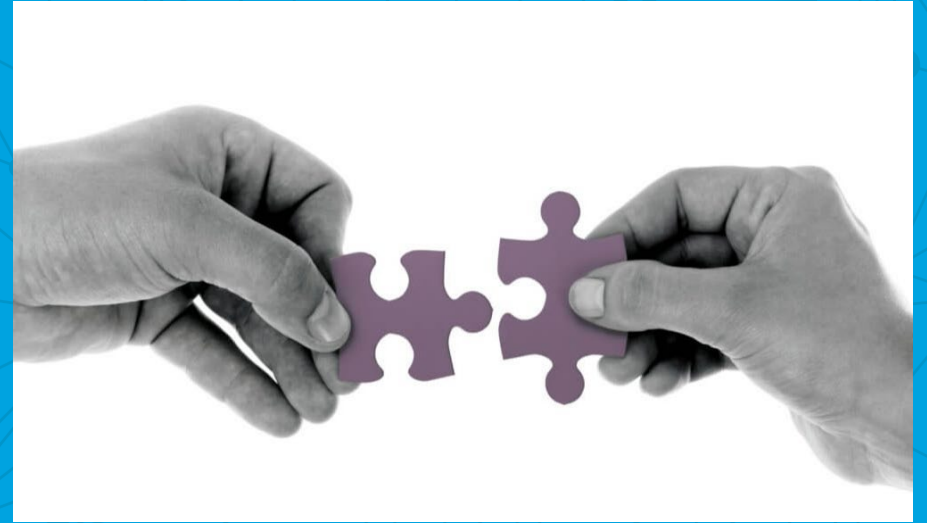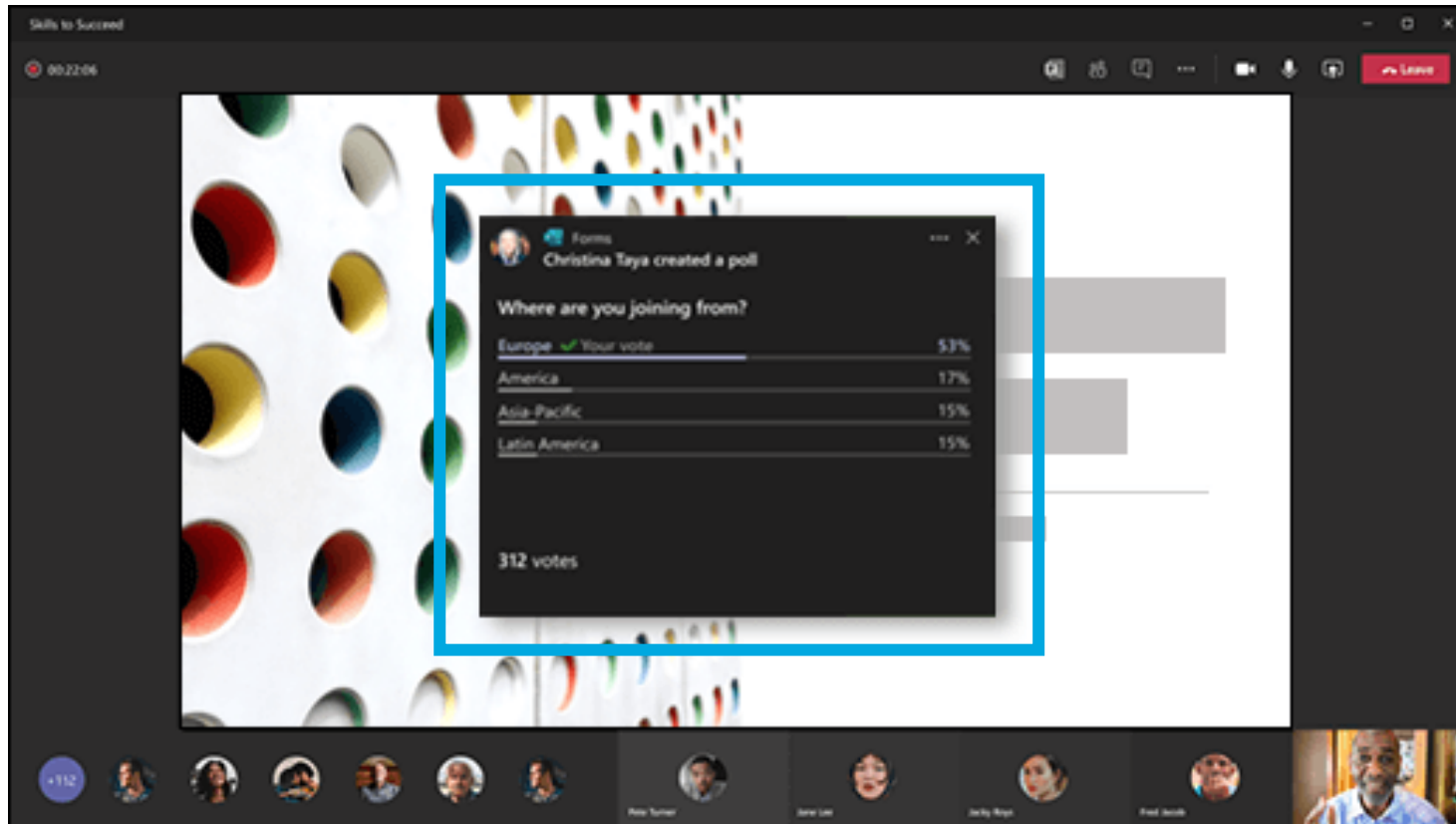
# Agenda

01 – Call for Communities

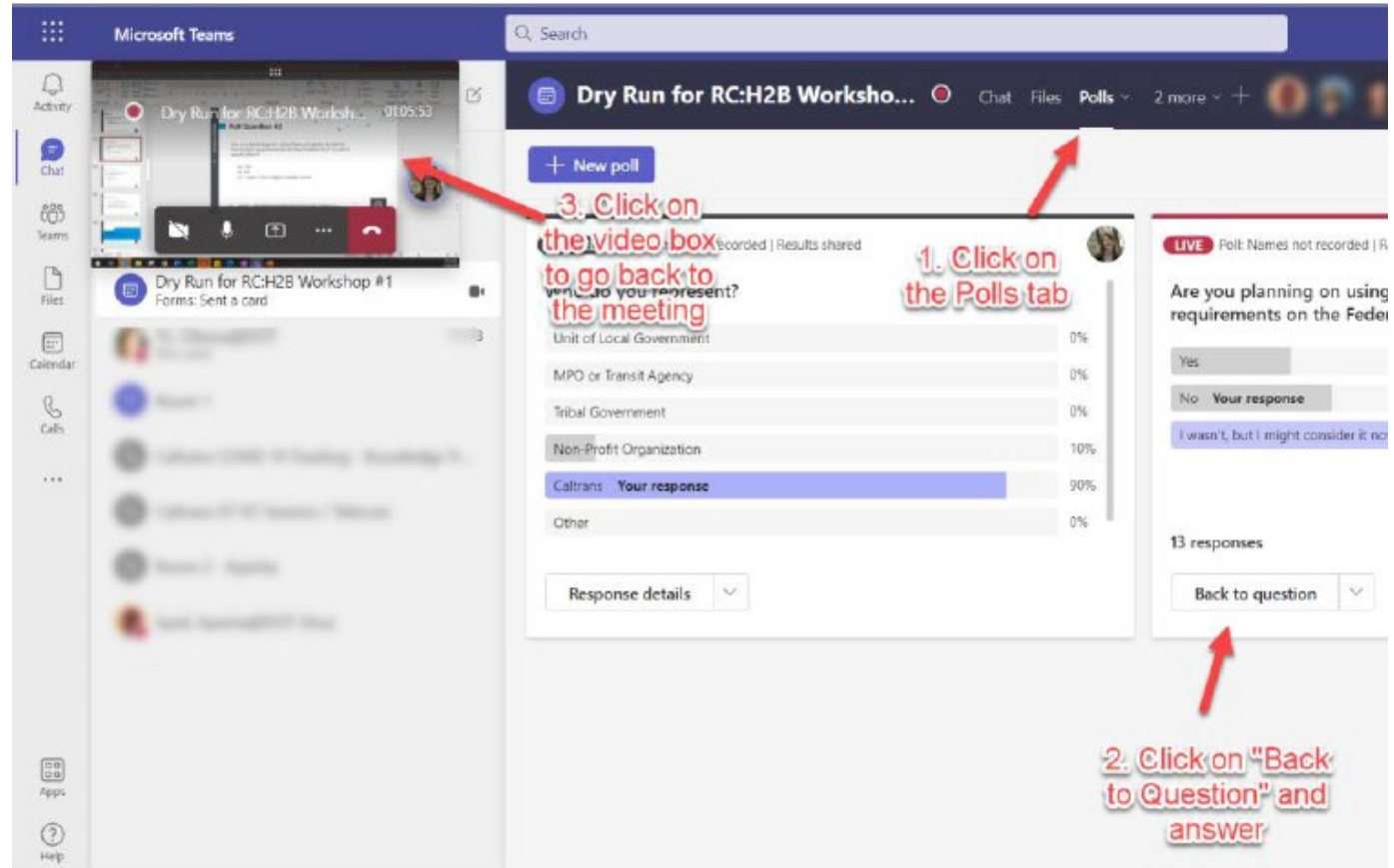02 – Eligibility

03 – Evaluation Criteria
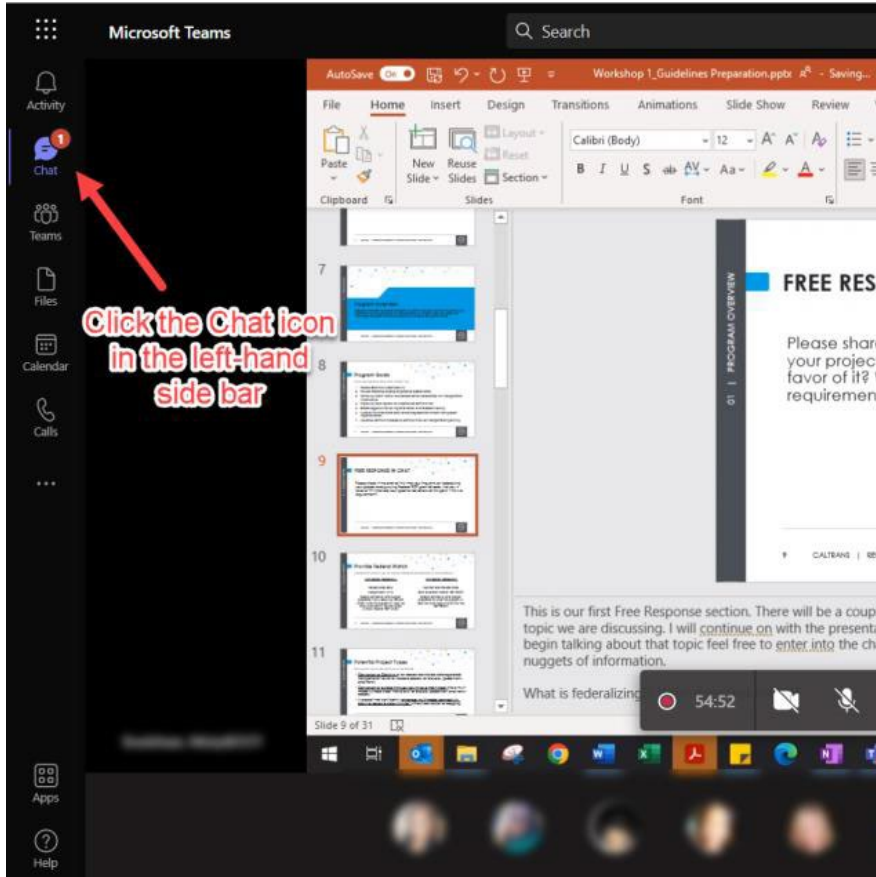
04 – Project Phasing

05 – Summary and Next Steps

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# How to Participate in Polls – Desktop

# How to Participate in Polls – Web

# How to Participate in Polls – Mobile

# Meet the Team

*PRESENTING TODAY:*

**MISTY BRADSHAW**

RC:H2B Program Manager

Caltrans Division of Local Assistance

**JIMMY TRAN**

Transportation Planning Lead for RC:H2B

Caltrans Division of Transportation Planning

**GRETCHEN CHAVEZ**

Office Chief

Caltrans Division of Local Assistance

*OTHER MEMBERS OF THE RC:H2B TEAM WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES TODAY:*

**NAILA SHARMEEN**

RC:H2B Grant Program Coordinator

Caltrans Division of Local Assistance

**ABBY JACKSON**

Sr. Planner

Caltrans Planning and Modal Programs

**ALYSSA BEGLEY**

Office Chief

Caltrans Division of Transportation Planning

# Call for Communities

*WHERE WE ARE AT IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT*

- Restore Community Connectivity
- Provide matching funds for federal grants
- Removing barriers associated with transportation infrastructure
- Improve travel options
- Opportunities for implementation of affordable housing
- Avoid displacement effects
- Advance Community-Based transportation planning

# Poll Question #1

Who do you represent?

a)   Unit of Local Government
b)   MPO or Transit Agency
c)   Tribal Government
d)   Non-Profit Organization
e)   Caltrans
f)    Other

# Call for Communities

After all the feedback received, the RC:H2B Team realized we needed a different approach.

Not a typical "Call for Projects" structure.

RC:H2B is a pilot study.

# Draft Guideline Status

*WHERE WE ARE AT IN PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT*

- Second Draft Guidelines have been posted to the website.

- Updated to include the Call for Communities strategy.

- Some sections of the Guidelines are still pending. These are still in development and will be incorporated into the Final Draft Program Guidelines.

# Call for Communities / Place Based Concept

Award to a Community, not an individual project.

## Holistic Approach:

- Address the full needs of the community.
- The efforts may extend past a single typical project.
- Transformative community efforts.
- Leverage efforts and funding.
- Inter-Agency coordination.
- Projects from concepts to completion.

# Community Involvement

Provide the Communities with the power of self-determination.

- Needs are identified.
- Wants are considered.
- Solutions are proposed.

What does this look like?

- Establish Partnerships.
- Input into each phase of the project.
- Community members take ownership.

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# **Poll Question #2**

Do you have community partners currently involved on your potential project?

a. Yes, and they have been actively involved.
b. Yes, in early stages of involvement.
c. Not yet. Will develop partnerships prior to application submittal.
d. Intending to develop partnerships after award.
e. We do not have community partnerships as part of this project.

# **Questions**

Please place any questions in the chat at this time for any of the topics we just discussed:

a) Draft Guideline Status
b) Call for Communities / Place-Based Concept
c) Community Involvement

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# Eligibility

Categories of Awards

Eligible Applicants

Eligible Facilities

Eligible Project Area

# Urban vs. Rural vs. 3ʳᵈ Category

*DEFINING WHAT TRANSPORTATION FACILITY IS ELIGIBLE*

Two to three communities will be awarded under three grant categories:

1. Urban –Communities with populations of 50,000 or more

2. Rural – Areas with less than 50,000 people

3. Corridor – Linear geographic area (e.g., State Highway) with one or more transportation modes can serve multiple underserved rural or urban communities

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# Eligible Applicants

May include but not limited to:

- Units of local government
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)
- Local agencies, regional agencies
- Joint powers authorities
- Federally recognized Tribal governments
- Transit agencies and private entities

**Lead Applicant**

-Grant admin

- Program and fiscal reporting

-May be facility owner

**Co-Applicant**

- >1 encouraged

-Caltrans co-app if facility is on SHS

-May be facility owner

**Implementing Agency**

-Must be a lead or co-applicant

-Varies by project phase

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# Eligible Applicants

*PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES*

Lead and co-applicants may choose to partner on the application with the following:

- Tribal governments

- Community-based organizations

- Joint powers authorities

- Local government agencies

- Nonprofits and foundations

- Small businesses

- Organizations with a history of providing community-based outreach or technical assistance

Organization List:

- Academic institutions

- Faith-based organizations

- Farming cooperatives

- Neighborhood associations

- Resource conservation districts

- Tribal-serving organizations

- Community choice aggregates

- Community land trusts

- Non-profit organizations

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# Eligible Facility

*APPLICATION MUST ADDRESS AN ELIGIBLE FACILITY*

May include, but not limited to:

Highway or other **transportation facility** that **creates barrier to community connectivity,** including barriers to mobility, access, or economic development.
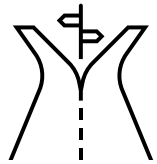
- Interstate Highway
- State Highway
- Arterial Roadway
- Other streets/roads

- Bridge or viaduct

- Transit or Rail facilities

# Eligible Project Area

*REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROJECT AREA*

r =1.78 miles
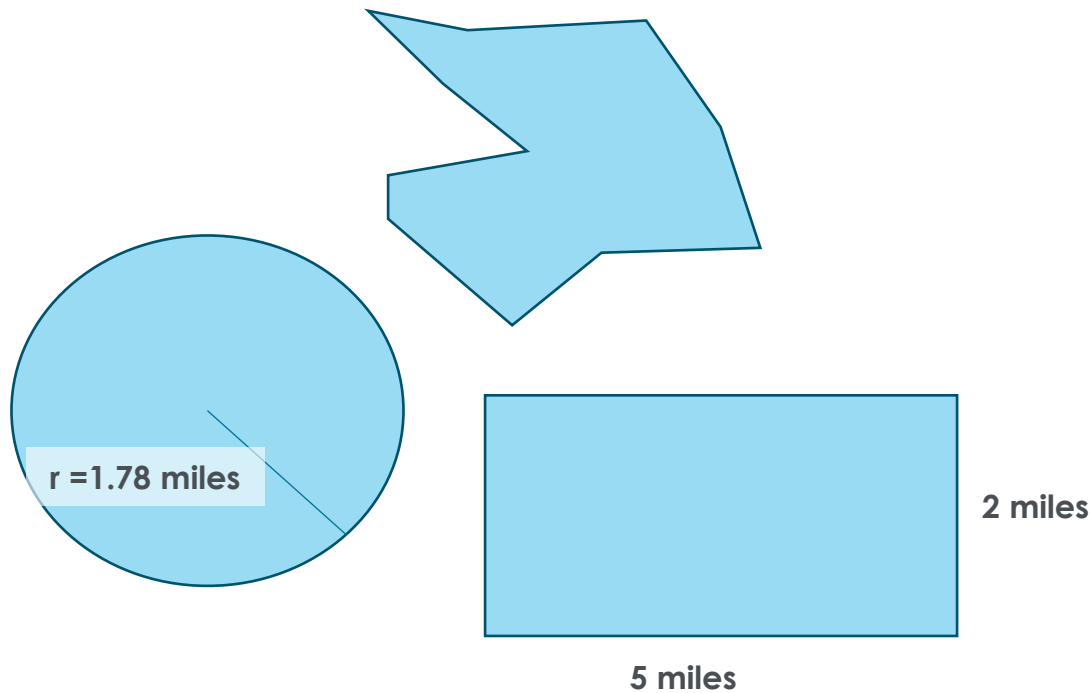
2 miles

5 miles

- Project Area can be any contiguous shape but must not exceed **5 square miles** for urban areas and **10 square miles** for rural.

- Must contain, at least in part, the eligible facility creating the barrier.

- Must be located within or directly adjacent to an underserved community.

# **Poll Question #3**

Rural and Urban Categories are Proposed. **What would you recommend as the 3rd Category**?

a) Corridor
b) Suburban / Semi-Urban
c) No 3rd Category
d) Other

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# **Questions**

Please place any questions in the chat at this time for any of the topics we just discussed:

a) Categories of Awards
b) Eligible Applicants
c) Eligible Facilities
d) Eligible Project Area

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# Project Phasing

A project is made up of multiple phases and components.

A project, in the context of this grant, will be the full life cycle of the proposed improvements for the community. **From concept to completion!**

# Project Phasing

## PROJECT

| Community Readiness | Planning | Environmental | Design | Right of Way | Construction |

**Community Involvement**

# Community Readiness

*FIRST PHASE AFTER AWARD*

**Begin or Continue Community Engagement**

**Community Readiness**

**Create a framework for future phases**

**Establish Partnerships**

**Prepare a Scope Schedule and Budget for next Phase**

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# **Funding Distribution by Phase**

Prior to the start of each Phase, or component, awardee will submit a fund disbursement request.

a) Request shall include a scope schedule and budget for that proposed phase or component.

b) Request shall have a fully funded scope.

c) Caltrans will perform a risk assessment.

d) RC:H2B funds may be used for any of the phases but still must be expended by **June 30, 2026,** before the funds revert.

# **Poll Question #4**

What efforts have been performed to date that contribute to your proposed RC:H2B project?

a) Community engagement to determine the needs and wants.
b) Preliminary studies specific to RC:H2B scope of work.
c) Local or regional studies not specific to RC:H2B but may be used to develop the scope for your RC:H2B project.
d) Partnerships established.
e) Other

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# **Questions**

Please place any questions in the chat at this time for any of the topics we just discussed:

a)   Project phases
b)   Community Readiness
c)   Funding distribution by phase

# Evaluation Criteria

Application will receive an initial pre-screening for completeness.

Applicants will have the option to attend Open Office Hours. A list of questions to consider has been provided to prepare applicants.

Scoring will be a combination of Qualitative and Quantitative evaluation criteria.

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# Screening Criteria

*PROGRAM THRESHOLD REQUIREMENTS (CHECKLIST)*

Applicant identified one of the three area grant type categories:

☐ Urban        ☐ Rural        ☐ Corridor

☐ Does your application address in detail existing community engagement efforts/partnerships?

☐ Did you provide detailed justification that demonstrates your project is predominantly benefitting underserved communities?

☐ Is your Project located in or nearby to underserved community?

☐ Do you have plans to assist in the development of local job training and anti-displacement policies and programs?

# Evaluation Criteria

*OPTIONAL PRE-EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND OFFICE HOURS*

- Optional Office Hours will be held during the Application Preparation Phase.

- Pre-Screening Questions have been provided.
  - These are optional but it is encouraged to answer these questions prior to meeting during Open Office Hours.

- Attendance at these Open Office Hours does not affect the competitive nature of the application.

# Project Scoring

| Component Number | Scored Components | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Narrative (Qualitative) | Objectives and Vision | |
| | | Project and Community Location (Urban/Rural/Corridor) | |
| | | Project Deliverability | |
| 2 | Transformative Community Efforts (Qualitative) | Removing Barriers | |
| | | Community Involvement/Community Readiness | |
| | | Climate Adaptation and Resilience | |
| | | Displacement Avoidance | |
| | | Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities | |
| 3 | Baseline Metrics (Quantitative) | **State Definition of Underserved Community** | |
| | | **Federal Definition of Underserved Community** | |
| | | Effects of GHG | |
| | | Effects of VMT | |
| | | Transportation, Land Use, and Housing Goals | |
| 4 | Capacity/ Deliverability (Qualitative) | Applicant Readiness | |
| | | Technical Assessment | |
| | | Financial Assessment | |
| | | Environmental Assessment | |
| | | Community Partnerships | |
| | Sum | | |

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# **Underserved Community**

*COMBINATION OF BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL TOOLS/DEFINITIONS*

## STATE METRICS

Must Pick at least 2 metrics to qualify:

- SB 535 Disadvantaged Communities

- Healthy Places Index 3.0

- Area Medium Income

- CalEnviroScreen

## FEDERAL METRICS

Must pick at least 1 metric to qualify

- Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tract

- Historically Disadvantaged Community

- Areas of Persistent Poverty

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# Poll Question #5

Would you be interested in attending an open office hour with RC:H2B staff prior to submittal of your application?

   a) Yes
   b) Maybe
   c) No

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# Poll Question #6

Do the metrics used to determine "underserved" seem reasonable?

a) Yes
b) Maybe
c) No
d) I have other metrics for consideration

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# Questions

Please place any questions in the chat at this time for any of the topics we just discussed:

a) Conformance to the Program Goals
b) Initial Screening
c) Optional Pre-Screening Questions and Office Hours
d) Evaluation and Scoring

# Summary and Next Steps

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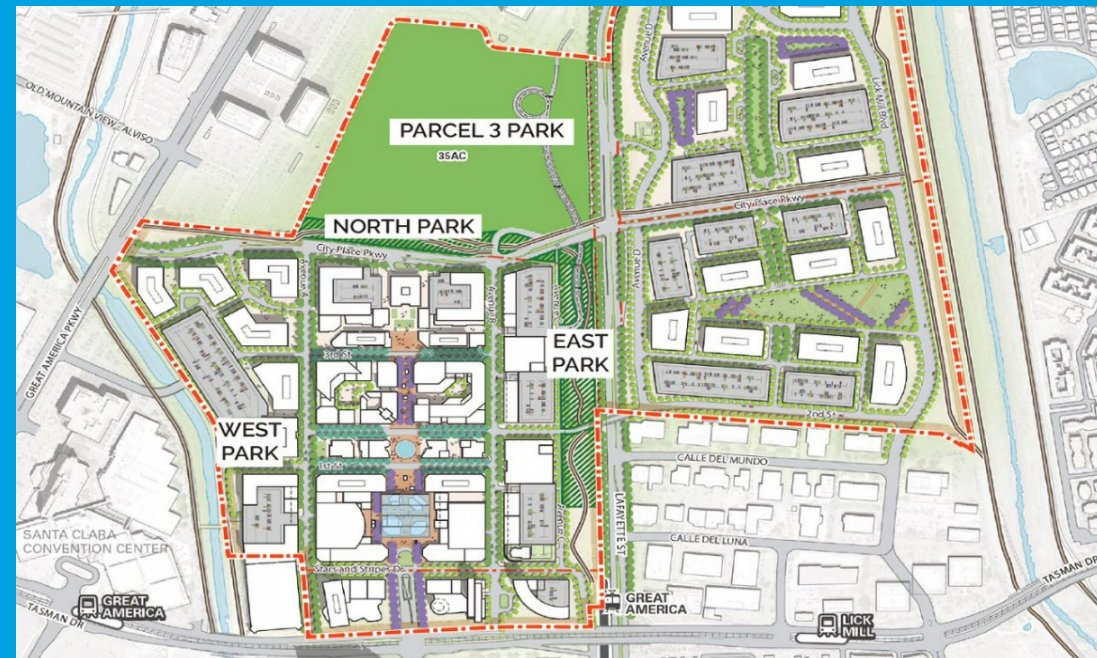
# Summary

- Takeaways and Items to Consider:
  - Place-Based Concept
  - Projects do not need to be fully developed at time of application. Caltrans will work with the awardees through each phase.
  - Collaboration with the community is essential! Work together to identify needs and creative solutions.

- Reminder that our Second Rough Draft Guidelines are up on our website, available for viewing.

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# Next Steps

- In approximately 1 week, a recording and presentation slides will be posted on the website. FAQ document to follow.

- **Focus Group Meetings** (1 Rural, 1 Urban)
    - Please input in chat if you are interested in participating in our Focus Groups. Identify Rural or Urban.

- A fourth Guideline Workshop has been added to the schedule! April/May 2023 (tentative). Topics likely to include;
    - o Present the Final Draft Guidelines for Comment
    - o Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Part 2
    - o Anti-Displacement / Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

# Next Steps

| Milestone | Date |
|---|---|
| Fourth Program Guideline Workshop | April/May 2023 (tentative) |
| Call for Proposals | Late Spring/Early Summer 2023 |
| Application Workshops (3-4) | Summer 2023 |
| Proposal Application Submittal Deadline | Late Summer/Early Fall 2023 |
| Awards Announcement | Late 2023/Early 2024 |
| Federal Cycle 3 Applications Due | Fall 2024 (estimate) |

# **Poll Question #7**

Do you feel there is a Community in your region/area that may be eligible for and benefit from this program?

a) Yes!
b) Potential one in mind but need to investigate more.
c) Unsure at this time.
d) No.

# Important Links

- The Reconnecting Communities: Highways to Boulevards Program webpage: https://dot.ca.gov/programs/local-assistance/fed-and-state-programs/rc-h2b

- Join our mailing list to receive information on the RC:H2B Program: https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/ruSZ8zX

- The Federal Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Website: https://www.transportation.gov/grants/reconnecting-communities

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