

Taylor Yard Equity Strategy

Progress Report 1

September 2025

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Introduction Letter

September 2025

On behalf of the 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard, I am grateful and proud to share the Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy (“Community TYES,” or “TYES”) Progress Report 1. The report is the result of a collaborative effort centered on the voices of neighbors of the Taylor Yard site along the Los Angeles River, research, and consideration of peer examples. At this milestone, the 100 Acre Partnership members wish to offer thanks, convey the intention of this equity project, and extend a warm invitation to continue to join us as we carry on further community discussion, planning, and implementation of equity strategies.

As the 100 Acre Partnership began to plan restoration and park building at Taylor Yard, we listened closely to community members: about their ideas and hopes for the future park, about the desire to connect with nature, and also about their reasonable concerns that this major open space investment could contribute to ongoing changes in their neighborhoods. We launched the Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy to help navigate potential changes and take steps to accentuate the benefits of the new park space while understanding and minimizing potential challenges. Taylor Yard River Park will, firstly, serve its neighbors, who we hope will feel a meaningful connection to the park and experience a wide variety of its benefits.

We were thrilled to form a partnership with the Los Angeles Regional Open Space and Affordable Housing (LA ROSAH) Collaborative, the Resources Legacy Fund, the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, and others to launch the Community TYES effort. We aspire to build an actionable model that intrinsically integrates equity considerations with major capital projects.

This report is not a conclusion; rather, it is an early milestone on a long-lasting journey of collaboration among community members, organizations, and public sector agencies. We believe that the strategic opportunities outlined in this report respond to community concerns and lay out a path to address likely impacts. Continued collaboration and research will be crucial to further develop strategic opportunities and implement action steps to make them real.

So, we invite you to participate. Your insights, ideas, and involvement are instrumental in realizing the full potential of the Taylor Yard Equity Strategy.

With enormous gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Affeldt', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Affeldt
Los Angeles River Revitalization Coordinator
City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering
On behalf of the 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard

The 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard

The City of Los Angeles, California State Parks, and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) are public-agency property owners of 100 acres of adjoining land in Northeast Los Angeles that was once part of a rail operations facility known as Taylor Yard. The collaboration, known as the 100 Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard, is coordinating the creation of the largest restored open space along the Los Angeles River. The partnership evolved from community feedback on the need for a unified approach to improve the Taylor Yard site. The 100 Acre Partnership area includes:



1. Rio de Los Angeles State Park, an existing 40-acre park owned by California State Parks, and managed cooperatively by State Parks and the City of Los Angeles through its Department of Recreation and Parks;
2. The Taylor Yard “G1” “Bowtie” parcel, an 18-acre property known for its distinctive shape, which is owned and in the process of being designed and built by State Parks; and
3. The Taylor Yard “G2” parcel, a 42-acre property owned by the City. MRCA purchased the right to develop a 12.5-acre easement within the G2 parcel.

The LA ROSAH Collaborative

The Los Angeles Regional Open Space and Affordable Housing (LA ROSAH) Collaborative, established in 2016, is a group of housing justice and park equity organizations that believe no one should have to choose between more parks or more affordable housing. LA ROSAH envisions a vibrant Los Angeles in which all poor, working class, and people of color residents play an active role in shaping and staying in their neighborhoods, and have equitable access to high-quality safe parks, open space, affordable homes, and healthy, resilient neighborhoods.



LA ROSAH
LA Regional Open Space &
Affordable Housing Collaborative

Purpose of the Report

Progress Report 1 (“Report”) is the first document published from the work of the TYES project team. It is intended to:

- Introduce the project team
- Introduce the project geography and the 100 Acre Partnership projects
- Describe the intention of the Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy
- Summarize the work performed to date
- Propose strategic opportunities for action on equity
- Ask for feedback
- Chart next steps for TYES

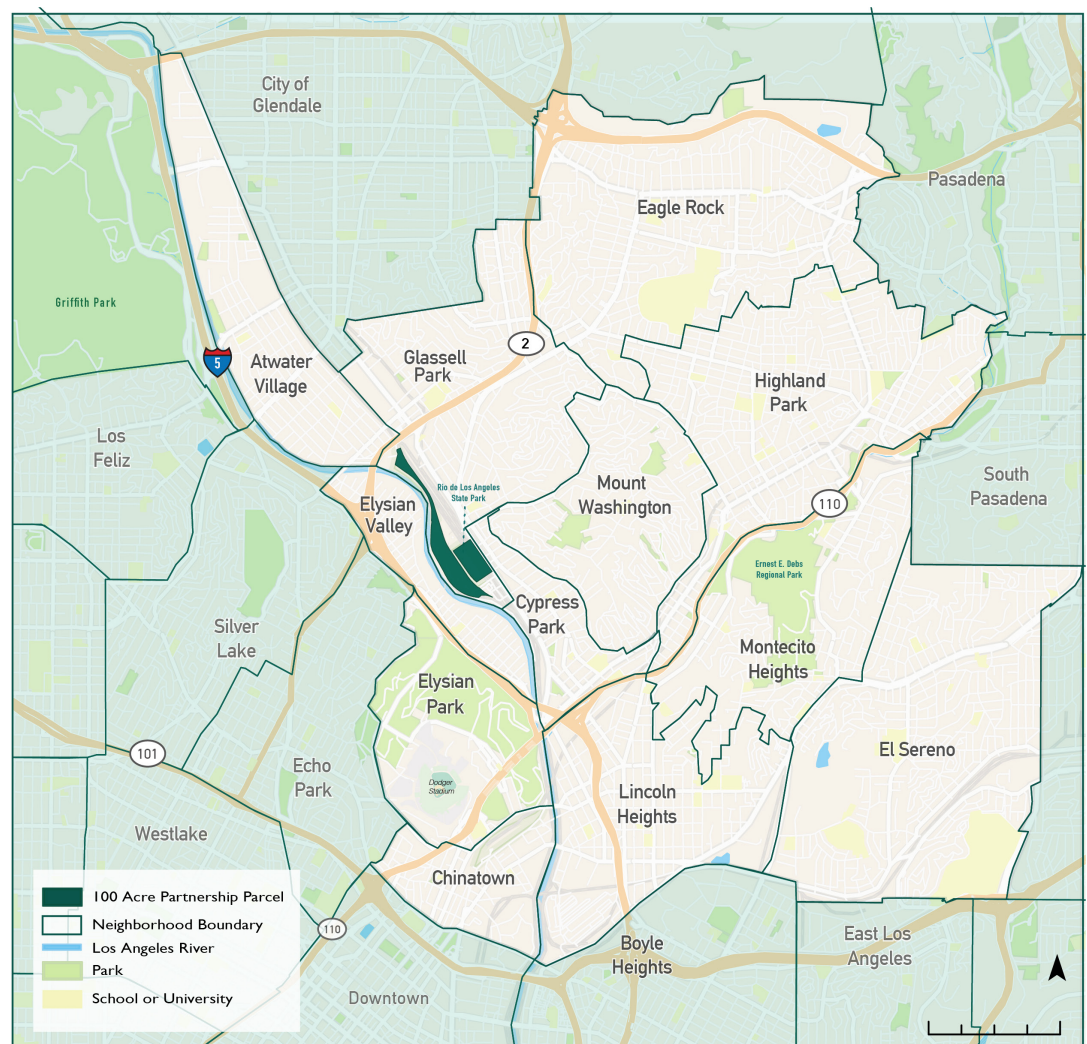
Project Context

Geography and History

Taylor Yard is a former Southern Pacific Railroad terminal where locomotives were cleaned and repaired, and boxcars were sorted and staged for transporting goods regionally until the 1980s. At its peak Taylor Yard employed 5,000 people with 50 trains a day rolling through the site. However, Taylor Yard lacked the modernization of other regional railyards, and, ultimately, competition and changing rail infrastructure made it obsolete.¹

After the decline and closure of Taylor Yard as a functional railyard, community groups sought to identify the best use of river-adjacent real estate. According to a 1991 LA Times article, community members expressed a desire for the site to contain new commercial centers, affordable housing, and recreational parks, boosting economic revitalization in the community after the closure of the railyard.²

The former railyard runs 2.5 miles between San Fernando Road and the Los Angeles River. It is surrounded by the Northeast LA neighborhoods of Atwater Village, Cypress Park, Eagle Rock, Elysian Valley or Frogtown, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Montecito Heights, and Mount Washington. Taylor Yard and the surrounding neighborhoods are wedged between three major highways, Dodger Stadium, and a range of industrial infrastructure.



Neighborhoods adjacent to the 100 Acre Partnership area. Map by Emma Ramirez, UCLA Institute.

¹ Larry Gordon, "Economy, Modernization Quiet Railyard," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1985, www.newspapers.com/article/the-los-angeles-times/131915122/.

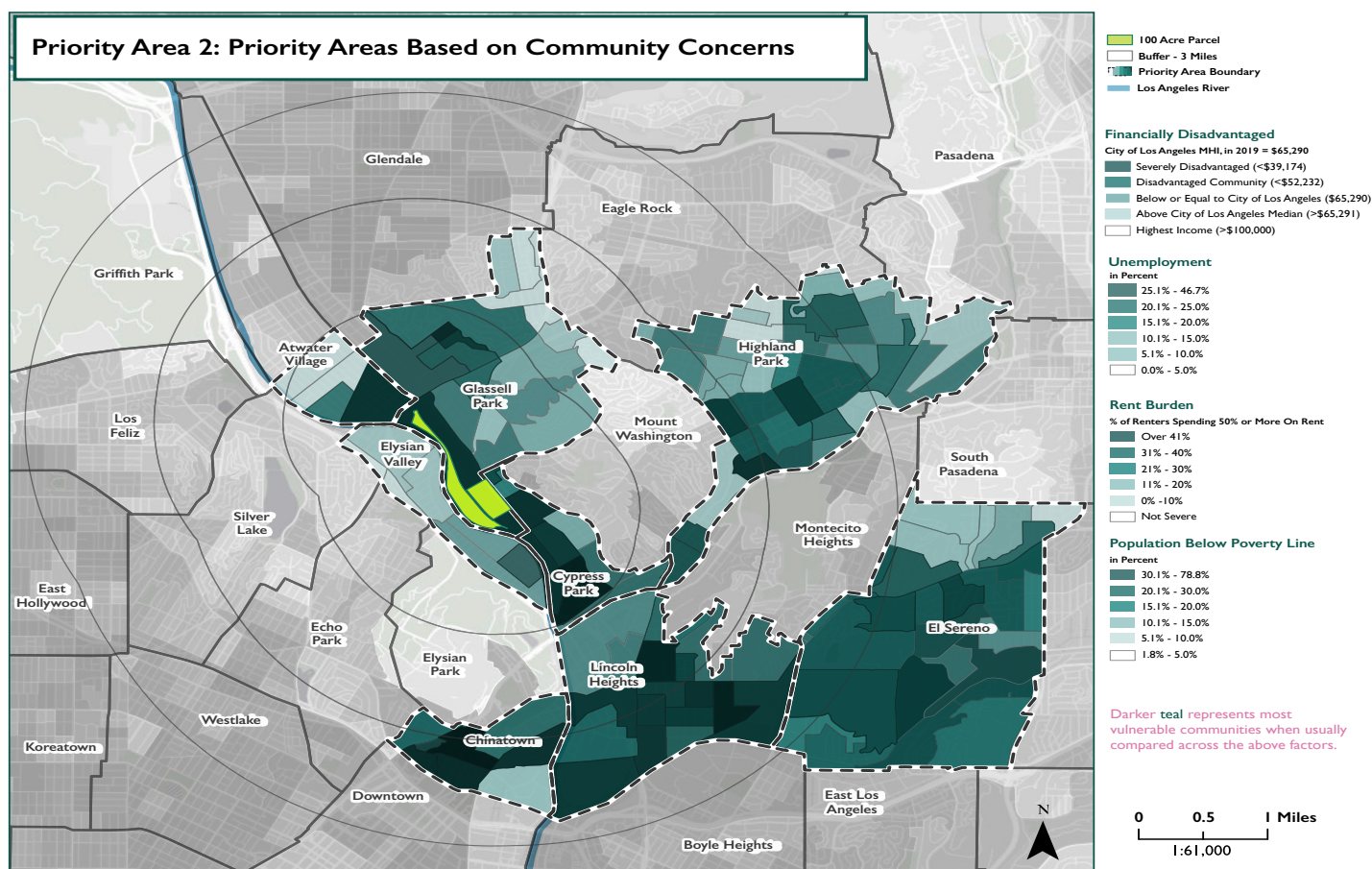
² Phil Sneiderman, "County Agency Admits It Should Have Told About Plan to Buy Glassell Park Land," *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 1991.

Taylor Yard is on the eastern bank of the Los Angeles River as it flows through the Elysian Valley, where the water table is perched so high, a concrete bottom could not be placed in the channel when the river was largely encased in concrete for flood control in the 20th century. As a result, this soft bottom stretch of the river is one of the few places where riparian habitat can still be found along the river.

While the project area boundaries for Communities TYES will evolve through forthcoming conversations, the TYES effort identified neighborhoods that make up Northeast LA to begin initial community engagement.

However, many community members we talked with did not specify a neighborhood on which to focus; instead, they emphasized the importance of prioritizing vulnerable areas, such as economically disadvantaged communities, those with a high rent burden, higher amounts of unemployment, or limited access to transit and other services. Based on this feedback, the team layered several socio-economic datasets based on the priorities identified by residents within the identified neighborhoods to develop a potential map and boundary for Community TYES. The darker colors on the map indicate higher vulnerability in terms of rent burden, unemployment, and income. The darkest areas, predominantly in Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Chinatown, and Lincoln Heights, also exhibit high levels of language isolation and non-citizenship status.

The native people of the land known today as Northeast Los Angeles call themselves Tongva and Kiche. Community members also told us that as ancestral inhabitants of this area, the tribal community is critical, especially in design and programming of spaces for gathering and cultural practices adjacent to the river. The Community TYES effort will need to conduct more intentional engagement with tribal



Priority areas based on community concerns. Map by Emma Ramirez, UCLA IoES.

communities to ensure that park development and equity strategies prioritize the voices and needs of indigenous residents and surrounding communities. Community TYES recognizes Northeast LA as the ancestral lands of the Gabrielino/Tongva and Kiche people, acknowledging displacement of Indigenous former residents. We aim to honor Indigenous sovereignty and collaborate with present and emerging Indigenous and local residents for concrete action supporting community history, sovereignty, and culture.

Taylor Yard River Park Projects

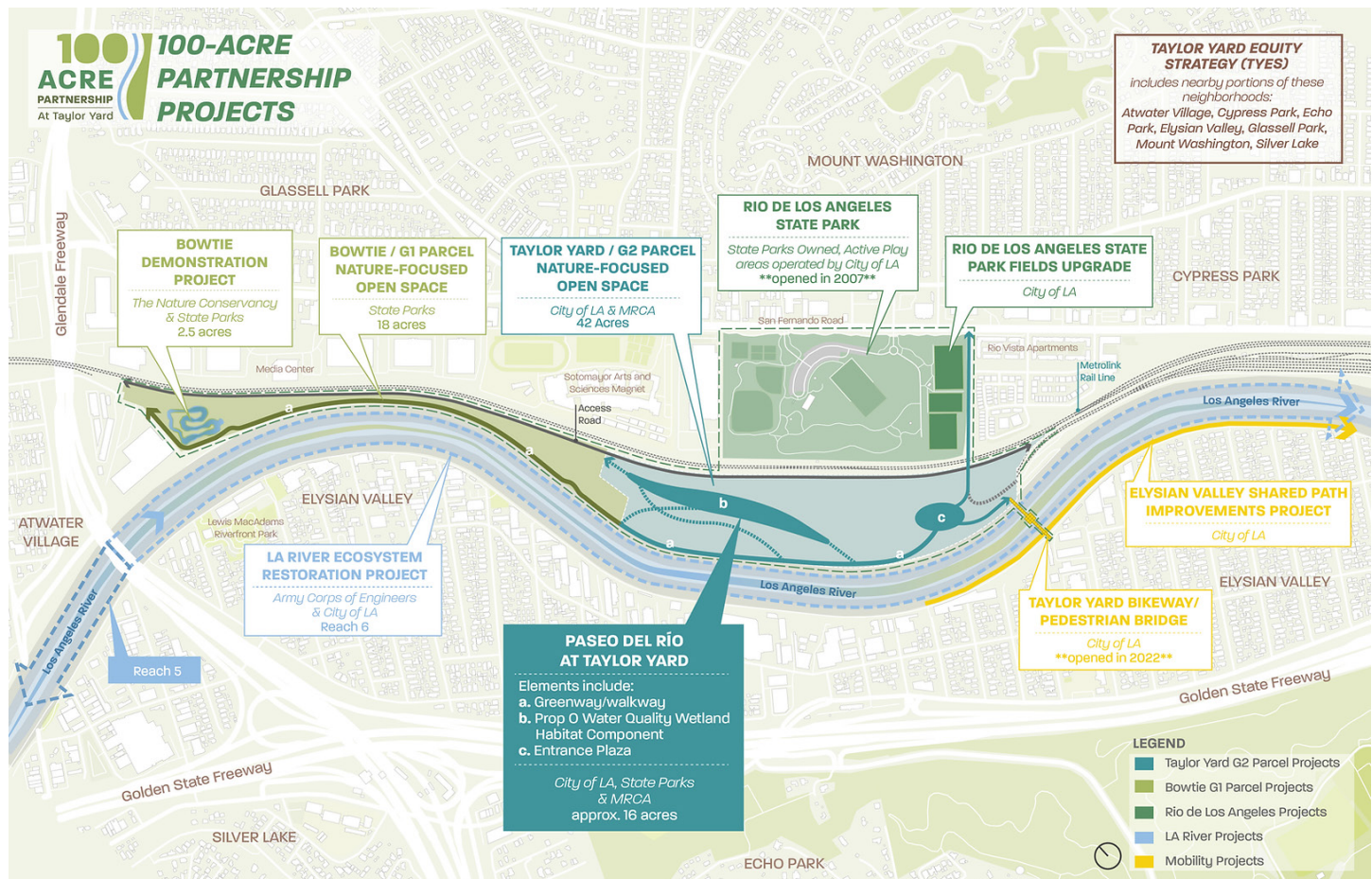


Image credit: 100 Acre Partnership

Within the 100 Acre Partnership area, projects will serve a variety of community and environmental needs. Projects will include large-scale restoration, open space design, and community uses, including:

The Paseo del Río at Taylor Yard will include habitat wetlands, stormwater treatment, native habitat, trails, and a community pavilion. Paseo del Río is in its planning phase, is located within the G2 parcel, and is led by the City with support from the MRCA.

The Bowtie Conceptual Development Project, which will restore wetland habitat and create public trails and open space on the Bowtie parcel, is led by State Parks and The Nature Conservancy.

Río de Los Angeles State Park Fields Improvement Project, which will upgrade sports fields and other amenities at the existing Río de Los Angeles State Park, is led by the City with support from State Parks.

Neighborhood Conditions

Taylor Yard is in an area of Los Angeles known as Northeast LA, or “NELA,” which extends across twelve neighborhoods northeast of downtown. NELA is home to more than 276,400 residents within an area of 21 square miles, resulting in a population density of about 13,000 people per square mile, which makes this region far denser than the city of Los Angeles on average. Latinos make-up at least 50% of almost every neighborhood in NELA, which overall has a population that is about 60% Latino, 18% Asian, and 17% White. Many residents speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the most common language at 48%. The immigrant population within NELA is 12% higher than the city of Los Angeles on average.

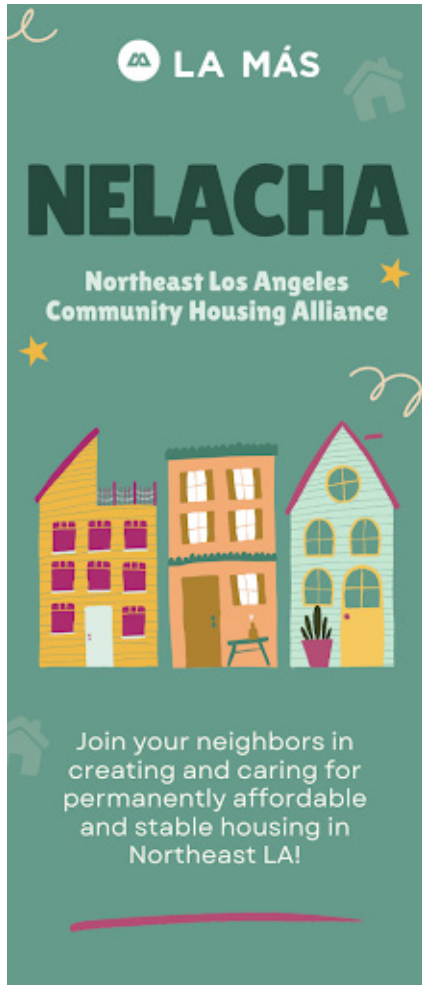


Image credit: LA Más

NELA has a rich history of cultural heritage and community organizing. Initially at the closure of the railyard, community members campaigned against the expansion of industrial uses, demanding green spaces and soccer fields along the river.³⁴ Organizations such as Anahuak Youth Sports Association, which began in 1994, provided opportunities for young people in the community and supported advocacy around equitable green space. Today, groups like LA Más and the Northeast LA chapter of LA Tenants Union (LATU) are continuing to organize for a more just community future; they coordinate Northeast Los Angeles Community Housing Alliance (NELACHA), one effort to build community power around permanently affordable housing that fosters a sense of cohesion.

NELA has also borne the brunt of multiple environmental injustices. Within three miles of Taylor Yard site, 40 percent of the population lives in neighborhoods that are classified as disadvantaged communities based on the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Index, which uses indicators of pollution burden, such as air quality, and characteristics of vulnerable populations, including race and ethnicity, income, and employment status.⁵ Most of the households in NELA are occupied by low-income renters, many of whom are rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their household income on rent. Some of these neighborhoods are already experiencing the effects of green gentrification around Taylor Yard, with rising property values and rents, and a demographic shift towards a higher percentage of affluent, white households.

Purpose of Community TYES

Community members consistently express support for the Taylor Yard River Park projects as an opportunity to enjoy its planned restored natural habitat and recreational features. However, they also expressed fear that these new amenities could lead to rapid community changes, making it unaffordable

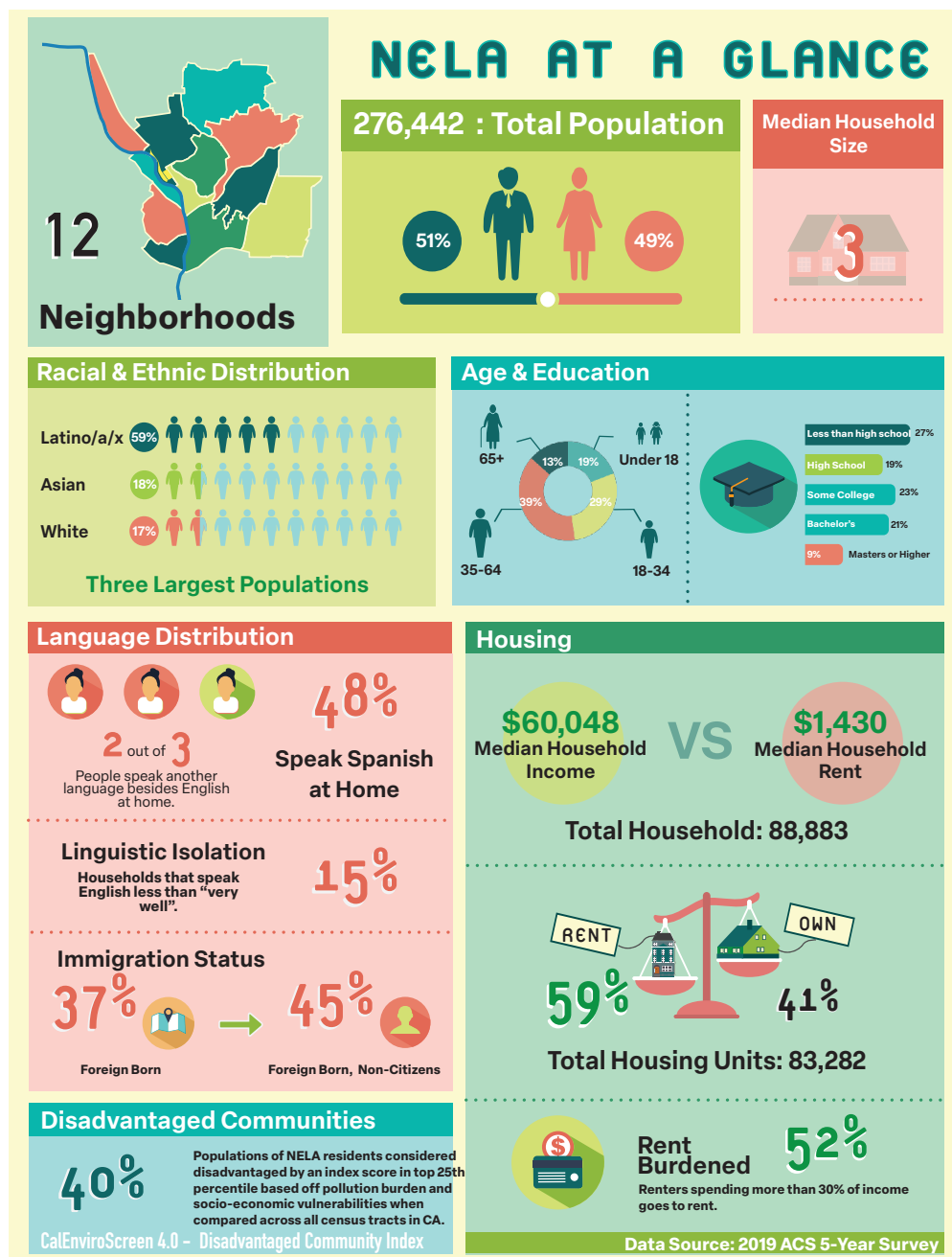
3 “Coalition for a State Park at Taylor Yard,” The River Project, accessed August 6, 2024, www.theriverproject.org/taylor-yard/the-coalition.

4 “The Community Organizes: 2000,” The River Project, accessed August 6, 2024, www.taylor-yard.org/the-community-organizes.

5 “CalEnviroScreen 4.0,” California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, May 1, 2023, oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40.

for them to live in their neighborhoods and enjoy the park. Some worry about being replaced by wealthier newcomers.

Communities in Northeast LA face increased financial and social pressures that threaten to displace communities of color and longtime residents with limited economic resources. The development of Taylor Yard as a 100-acre green space may exacerbate these pressures, contributing to displacement. “Green gentrification” occurs when green space investments trigger economic displacement, creating a “greenspace paradox” where efforts to provide equitable green space access end up financially pressuring existing residents to leave.⁶ A notable example is the High Line in New York, which transformed a former rail line into an elevated park, resulting in significant economic displacement in the Chelsea neighborhood.⁷



Graphic by UCLA.

Similar to other equitable community development projects across the United States, TYES aims to identify community-driven strategies to ensure current residents benefit from new park investments. This effort includes implementing anti-displacement policies that support longtime residents and legacy community-serving businesses.

The Community TYES initiative is intended to be a long-lasting collaboration between community members, organizations, and public sector agencies to prepare for and navigate changes in Northeast LA communities as public investments in green spaces come into the community. By working together to minimize the associated challenges of development, the neighbors most likely to be impacted by the park’s creation will be better able to thrive, connect with, and benefit from the new park space, along with the rest of the region.

6 Isabelle Anguelovski et al., “Green gentrification in European and North American cities,” *Nature Communications* 13, no. 1 (2022): 3816, doi.org/10.1038/s41467-022-31572-1

7 Katherine Flynn, “The High Stakes of the High Line Effect,” *Architect Magazine*, February 26, 2019, www.architectmagazine.com/aia-architect/aiafeature/the-high-stakes-of-the-high-line-effect_o.

Process

Where Are We Now?

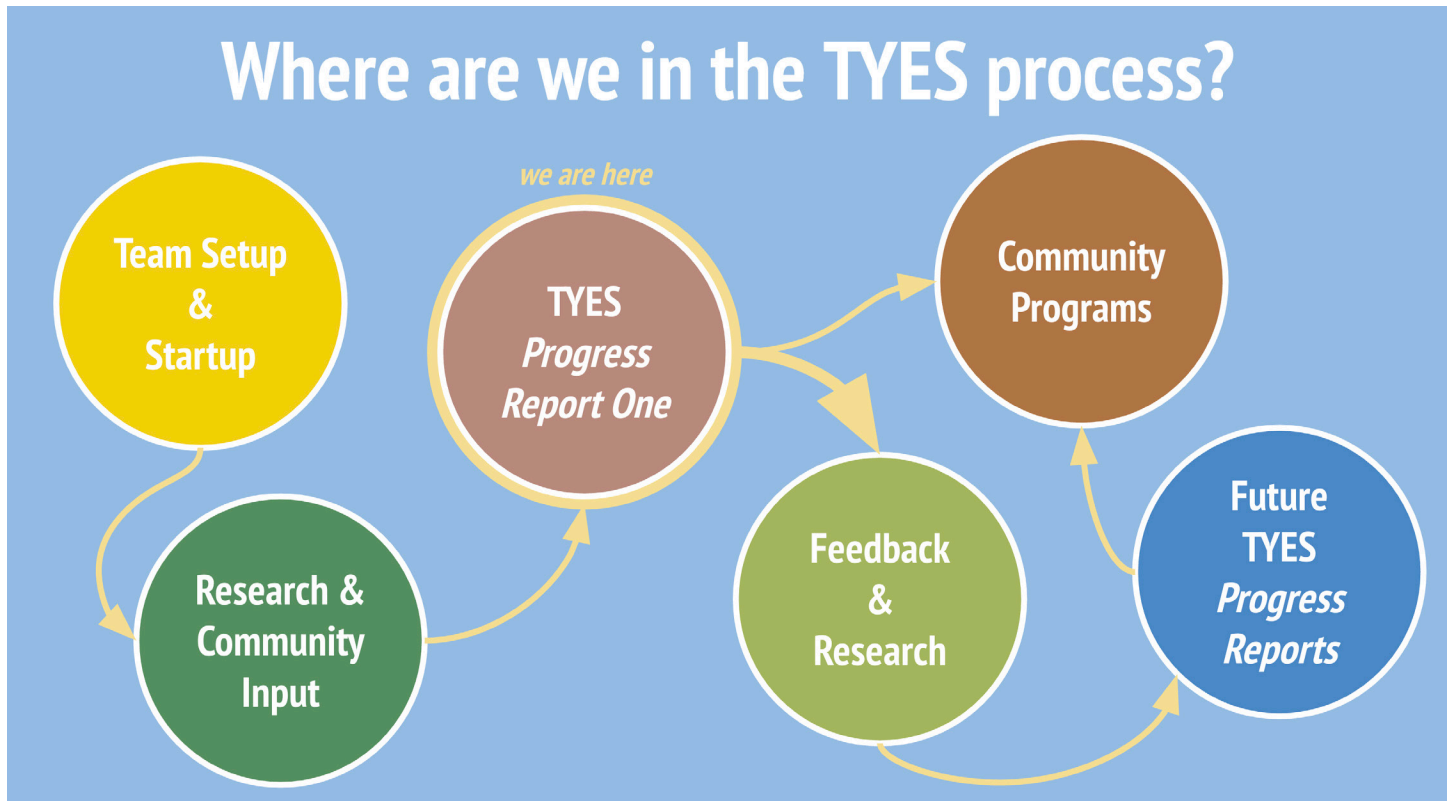


Image credit: Michael Affeldt.

Progress Report 1 is documentation of TYES work to date, which included initial strategizing and listening sessions, research, and community conversations. The work so far has identified opportunities for impact that this report outlines.

How Did We Get Here?

The concept of integrating equity planning with the planning and delivery of the physical restoration and improvements across the 100 Acre Partnership area began around 2019. Hearing community members' fears of displacement, project staff conducted internal workshops that included reflection on gentrification and equity questions. At the same time, the team sought external perspectives and learned about pilot peer cases around the nation.

Taylor Yard Equity Strategy **RFI Released May 2021**



I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Engineer, or his designee, be authorized to negotiate and execute a \$290,000 agreement with the Resources Legacy Fund (RLF), funded by both the City (\$190,000) and the RLF (\$100,000), for the planning, analysis, research, and community outreach associated with the program development of the Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy (TYES), and further, to work with the Los Angeles Regional Open Space and Affordable Housing organizations and other community members and experts to collaboratively develop the TYES.

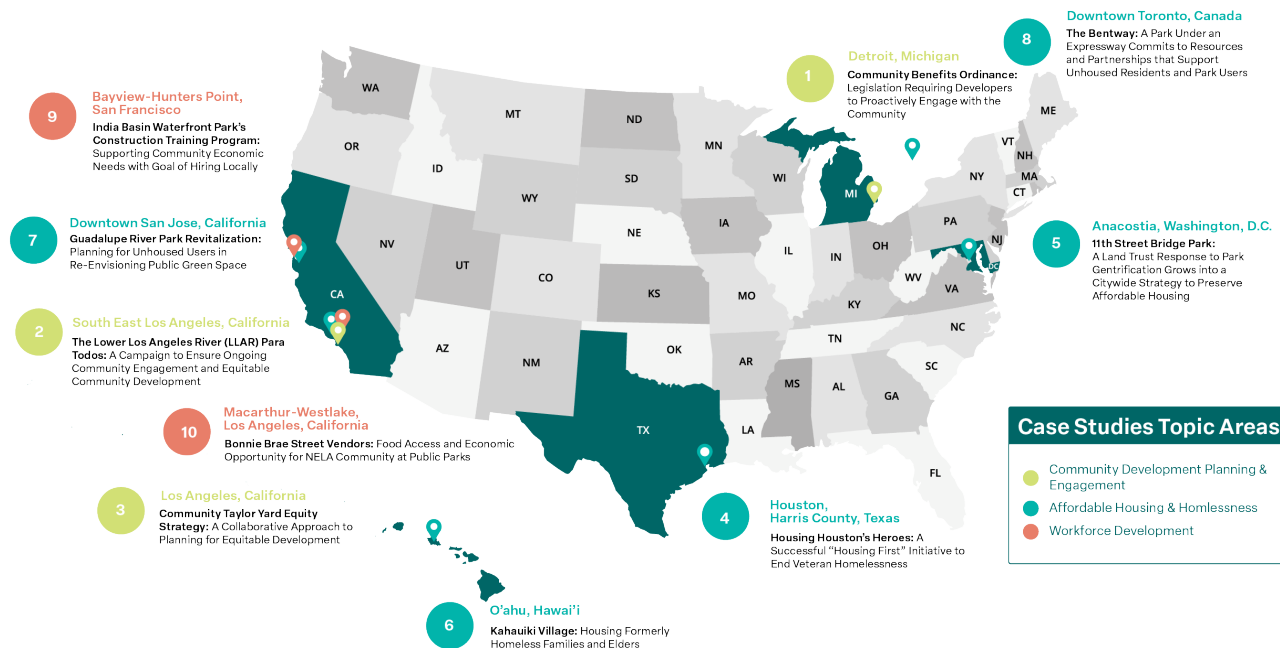
Motion Signed by Mayor Garcetti, June 30, 2022

In 2021, the City of Los Angeles, on behalf of the 100 Acre Partnership, assembled funding and then formed a partnership with LA ROSAH, the UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability, and Resources Legacy Fund to develop the TYES project as an earnest response to community feedback. This team has the benefit of a breadth of experiences and perspectives and shares the goal of delivering park improvements while mitigating negative effects.

Lessons From Peer Cases

As The 100 Acre Partnership began to develop the concept of the Taylor Yard Equity Strategy and make plans to integrate community equity planning with the park restoration project, we looked to inspiration and examples from peers. We researched efforts including the 11th Street Bridge Park (Washington, D.C.), Buffalo Bayou (Houston, Texas), Atlanta BeltLine (Atlanta, Georgia), The 606 Project (Chicago, Illinois), the High Line (New York City, New York), and others.

EQUITY STRATEGIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY



(See Appendix A: UCLA Report for more information on peer case studies.)

The Community TYES team observed and adopted successful practices such as:

- Setting up the project as a partnership between government, nonprofits, and community-based organizations
- Engaging multiple levels of government and seeking champions
- Pursuing funding opportunities
- Including academic research partners

From this scan of peer projects, we recognized the critical role that qualitative and quantitative research play in understanding and communicating potential impacts and concerns in park development. This initial phase leaned heavily on analyzing existing conditions, listening to community voices, and researching the policy and planning context for Community TYES.

Practices and Approaches

Review previous plans and engagement

Our work began with a review of existing plans and engagement efforts in Northeast LA. This research, led by the UCLA team, allowed us to understand and honor past engagement efforts. Our analysis identified community priorities from previous plans and we reintroduced them into current engagement efforts to assess their current relevance.

Understand the community through data

The UCLA team assembled data on those who live near the Taylor Yard site, and the City of LA worked with the EPA to conduct a workforce analysis for neighborhoods around the Taylor Yard G2 parcel. The UCLA work included asset mapping, a housing stability and workforce development policy analysis, and neighborhood profiles with data analyses completed on key factors contributing to population vulnerability and gentrification.



Pre-launch strategy session. Image credit: Natalie Donlin-Zappella.

Co-develop the TYES outreach strategy

On March 16, 2023, we convened more than 40 community leaders for a pre-launch strategy session. Resident and community-based organizations (CBO) leaders from Northeast LA, representatives from other LA-area CBOs, public sector partners, and experts in equitable development from outside of the LA area attended the session to help us deepen relationships and orient around the local communities. The team adjusted our outreach strategies, visual identity, and messaging strategy for Community TYES based on their feedback and direction.

Listen deeply and build trust

We focused on building trust by meeting people where they are and relying on existing relationships to identify key community leaders. We conducted one-on-one interviews with residents to listen deeply to their unmet needs and experiences. As we engaged with community members, we asked them to connect us with others who should be involved in the TYES process. This snowball approach helped us establish trust and proceed at a pace appropriate for the community. A Community TYES community organizer conducted interviews with over 20 NELA residents who were volunteers and organizers, revisiting, discussing, and validating priorities identified in previous planning efforts and in current community conversations. Community TYES team members also participated in and documented concerns voiced in NELA community meetings.

Seek out new voices

We also strived to reach individuals who had not been engaged in previous planning efforts to ensure equitable development strategies are inclusive and reflect the whole community's priorities. Our outreach included speaking with monolingual Spanish speakers, undocumented residents, and those with limited access to technology or resources.

Participate in existing community gatherings

At the encouragement of community stakeholders, our team participated in meetings that already take place in NELA to not duplicate efforts. They also advised us to be mindful about what we ask of community members and to provide for needs such as food, childcare, and translation. We built into our budget resources for individuals and CBOs to engage with us, and provided food, gift cards, and stipends to support them and their contributions in this process.

For more details on the methods, approach, and data analyses described above, please see Appendix A. For more information on the pre-launch strategy session, please see Appendix B.

Where Are We Going Next?

Progress Report 1 marks a significant milestone in the ongoing development of TYES. The next steps include gathering and processing feedback on this report, continuing research, and engaging in more community conversations. The team will also work to outline detailed programs and policies within the twenty opportunity areas identified during this process and begin piloting some for implementation. This work will culminate in the publication of the first version of a Taylor Yard Equity Strategy plan in about a year.

TYES will remain anchored by the 100 Acre Partnership and the City of LA's collaboration with the LA ROSAH Collaborative. Stakeholder groups, including government, academia, business, and nonprofits, will continue to be involved and added to help implement these opportunities.

Equity Action Areas

Community TYES efforts have highlighted several equity action areas, which convey the urgency of community concern and help prioritize strategic opportunities for action. In particular, through demographic analysis, stakeholder conversations, community meetings, and outreach efforts, we identified two areas for deeper analysis: 1) **housing stability** and 2) **workforce development**. In this section, we delve into each of these topics.

Housing Stability

In our preliminary research, we identified housing affordability and stability as a critical concern for community members, who advocated for diverse homeownership solutions accessible to lower-income residents, specifically seniors, unhoused individuals, and those at risk of displacement. Housing stability and affordability rose to the top of TYES priorities because of the ever-rising housing costs and limited affordable units in the community.

Community members emphasized that urgent action is needed to address gentrification and displacement, ensuring current residents benefit from park development and are shielded from eviction. Residents also expressed frustration with slow public policy support and mistrust of existing programs. They emphasized the need for accurate definitions of affordability in housing policy to ensure that policymakers targeted investments for those most likely to experience displacement due to lack of resources. Residents view housing issues as intertwined with park development, emphasizing the need for action to address

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“We need more opportunities and processes for Northeast LA communities to be meaningfully involved in every process of development within our communities, such as land development, housing policies, and city decision-making processes.”

displacement concerns. Residents stressed that the 100-acre park could exacerbate housing challenges, and that to break the cycle of distrust within the community, park developers must respond to actual housing needs. Concerns included the financial implications of gentrification exacerbating displacement. Some residents expressed advocacy for a cultural shift regarding class and affordability is evident, drawing parallels with historical injustices.

Despite challenges, residents maintain hope for a displacement-free NELA through solidarity networks and advocacy for regulatory changes. Community TYES aims to contribute to this movement by listening to residents,

strengthening solidarity ecosystems, and implementing equitable development strategies.

Predominantly Tenant Neighborhoods Facing High Housing Costs

Nearly 60% of NELA residents are renters. This share of renters is even higher for many neighborhoods within NELA, especially Chinatown, Cypress Park, Elysian Park, and Lincoln Heights, which have renter-occupied housing rates well above 60%. Almost all residents in Chinatown are renters (95%). The only neighborhoods that have a homeownership rate above 50% are Mount Washington (62%), Eagle Rock, and Montecito Heights (both at 52%).

Within NELA, 52% of all renters are rent burdened, spending 30% or more of their income on rent, while half of these renters are considered severely rent burdened spending 50% or more on rent.

Limited Supply of New and Affordable Units

The lack of availability of affordable housing has increasingly put displacement pressures on long-time residents. Within NELA, the median gross rent is \$1,450, and the median house value is \$623,600. Since 2010, median gross rent has increased 11%, and housing prices in the area have jumped 15%. It is important to note that the Low

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“We’re going to be gentrified out. Now the land is going to be cleaned up, does that mean we can stay here?”

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“Measure W, Measure A, and other policies are supposed to be for disadvantaged communities, but those are the communities being displaced. These become parks for the rich. Policies need to be changed before design. We can’t even use the term ‘affordable,’ because ‘affordable’ to whom? Even ‘low-income’ is not meaningful in the same way. We have whole new levels of poverty. That needs to be part of our conversation about equity.”

Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) has helped contribute to a 53% increase in affordable housing units in some neighborhoods in NELA within the past 10 years; however, this subsidization is not enough to

**VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA
RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS**

“Many times when apartment buildings are built, people from far-away neighborhoods get them. What can [we] do to qualify for those properties?”

support the density of low-income households residing in NELA. Lack of more affordable housing investments coupled with the fact that the number of vacant housing units for rent or sale has decreased by 48% since 2010, has dramatically limited the availability of housing for both renters and homeowners.

Producing Long-Term Affordable Housing

California has implemented policies to address the shortage of affordable housing for low-income renters, including using publicly owned land, providing incentives,

and allocating revenue for affordable housing (see Table 1 below). Municipalities such as Los Angeles have also enacted inclusionary zoning policies, requiring developers to designate a percentage of units as affordable for low-income tenants in exchange for incentives such as density bonuses. Expiring affordability covenants pose challenges for subsidized housing. LA’s Housing Element 2021-2029 reports 6,356 units with expiring restrictions between 2021 and 2026, and 3,056 units between 2026 and 2031. Near Taylor Yard, developments such as Rio Vista Apartments and Taylor Yard Apartments use federal funding programs such as LIHTC, which mandates a 55-year affordability covenant. Extending this term and applying it to various subsidy programs could prevent market-rate conversions. The proposed Downtown LA Community Plan update, for instance, proposes a 99-year affordability covenant for privately-funded affordable housing units.

NELA residents advocated for medium-density housing that increases affordability while maintaining neighborhood character. Cities are revising zoning regulations to promote “middle housing” (three to five units), which aligns with neighborhood aesthetics. California has passed state-level laws encouraging accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and easing standards for infill development such as duplexes and quadplexes on lots previously occupied by single-family homes.⁸

Alternative Housing Models

Some affordable housing advocates in LA are also exploring alternative models of housing. Social housing is one model for housing that remains affordable in perpetuity and that is collectively owned and governed by residents. With social housing, residents who live in a building have a say in how it is managed and operated. In some social housing buildings, tenants have the opportunity to acquire their homes by

**VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA
RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS**

“Affordability is key. We have to understand where we’re at. Example of Lincoln Heights. A lot of us, we don’t talk about public-private partnerships for housing anymore; we need publicly owned housing. We need... to sit down with the 100 Acre Partnership and say, you guys are talking about how beautiful it’s going to be, but we have to look at the financial component of it. Most of these people will not be here when it’s done. Governments need to say, look, we’re going to make these anti-gentrification zones.”

8 Department of City Planning, *Department of City Planning Recommendation Report* (case: CPC-2023-5273-CA) (Los Angeles: City of Los Angeles, 2023), planning.lacity.gov/plndoc/Staff_Reports/2023/11-16-2023/CPC_2023_5273_Commission_Packet_11.16.23.pdf.

making affordable payments.^{9 10} LA City Councilmembers recently introduced a motion to use new housing funds generated from Measure ULA (United to House LA) to explore social housing as a viable strategy for housing investment.¹¹

Tenant Protections and Assistance

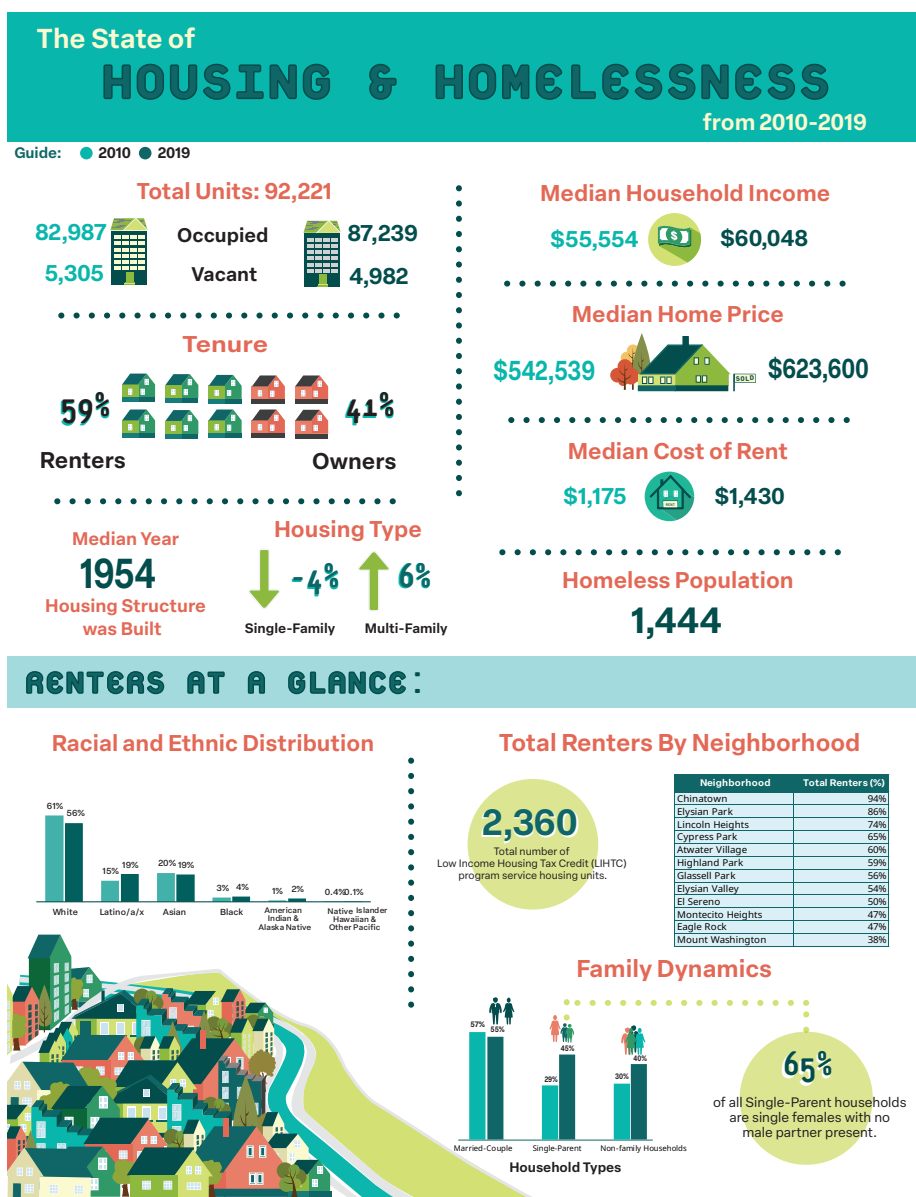
NELA residents desire enhanced rental protections and rent stabilization. Currently, the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act offers limited coverage, only allowing rent control on units built before 1995, excluding single-family homes and condos. Rents under this act reset upon vacancy. AB 1482, enacted in 2019, imposes a statewide limit of 10% annual rent increases for pre-2007 buildings not under rent stabilization.

Recent measures in other Southern California cities such as Bell Gardens and Cudahy establish stricter rent caps due to housing costs and inflation. Bell Gardens' Ordinance 925 restricts rent hikes to 50% of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 4% annually, with tenant protections against unjust evictions after 12 months (the protection resulted in a recent increase limit of just 1.9%). Cudahy limits rent increases to the CPI change or 3%.

Rental assistance, such as California's Emergency Rental Assistance program, provides aid during transitions, preventing housing insecurity. However, rental assistance, while vital, does not address rising property values and expiring affordability covenants. Long-term affordability needs prioritization.

Homelessness

With rising costs and limited affordable housing stock, the worsening housing crisis continues to push people into housing instability and homelessness.



Graphic by UCLA.

9 Jessica Semega and Melissa Kollar,

"Increase in Income Inequality Driven by Real Declines in Income at the Bottom," *United States Census Bureau*, September 13, 2022, www.census.gov/library/stories/2022/09/income-inequality-increased.html.

10 H. Jacob Carlson and Gianpaolo Baiocchi, "Social Housing: How a New Generation of Activists Are Reinventing Housing," *Nonprofit Quarterly*, June 6, 2023, nonprofitquarterly.org/social-housing-how-a-new-generation-of-activists-are-reinventing-housing/.

11 Administrator, "Los Angeles Councilmembers Introduce 'Social Housing' Motion," *The Los Angeles Post*, May 28, 2024, lapost.us/?p=65046.

An equitable housing approach must provide resources for people to remain in and access housing, including those experiencing and at-risk of homelessness.

LA County is split into eight Service Planning Areas (SPAs) that provide outreach and services to people experiencing homelessness; NELA falls into SPA 4 for Metro LA. In 2023, the total number of people experiencing homelessness in SPA 4 who were documented during the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)’s Homeless Count was 18,531. Of these individuals, 69% were unsheltered, living outside of a shelter. Almost 25% of unsheltered people in LA County live in SPA 4.¹² The highest concentration of unhoused people was in Chinatown and the northern part of Lincoln Heights at the border of Cypress Park. One strategy to address these figures is to utilize funds for supportive housing,

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“Community members need to be working. Not just involved through community engagement, but working on projects that are developed in their communities, and they need to be met where they are at. Train residents on how to influence their communities to get amenities directly.”

such as Project Homekey, a pandemic-era program with funds for turning hotels into housing units. According to LA County data, there are currently no Project Homekey sites in NELA.¹³

Not only must policies create pathways to housing stability, but they must also consider unhoused visitors in the design and programming of the future park. People experiencing homelessness are frequently forced to stay in public spaces and rely on public amenities. As the project is designed and built, site features such as restrooms, open spaces, food and drink provision must be designed to consider the needs and uses by unhoused people who will use the park.

Workforce Development

NELA, housing 148,041 workers. The workforce is predominantly Latino (57%), followed by White (21%) and Asian (18%). Female workers have risen by 13% since 2010, yet males still predominate. Median household income stands at \$70,851, peaking in Eagle Rock and Mount Washington, but it is lower in Chinatown and Lincoln Heights. Key industries include Education, Health Care, and Social Assistance (22%), Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food services (14%),

Highest and Lowest Levels of Education by Neighborhood and Unemployment			
Neighborhood	< High School (%)	Bachelor's Degree or > (%)	Unemployment Rate (%)
City of Los Angeles	2%	24%	6%
Lincoln Heights	41%	18%	9%
Atwater Village	16%	43%	5%
El Sereno	33%	21%	9%
Montecito Heights	26%	37%	7%
Cypress Park	40%	20%	9%
Elysian Park	40%	28%	6%
Elysian Valley	26%	29%	4%
Eagle Rock	12%	46%	6%
Highland Park	25%	29%	7%
Mount Washington	17%	45%	7%
Chinatown	37%	22%	6%
Glassell Park	22%	34%	7%

Graphic by UCLA.

12 “Los Angeles County Homelessness & Housing Map,” County of Los Angeles, March 7, 2024, storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/400d7b75f18747c4ae1ad22d662781a3.
13 Ibid.

and Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management services (12%).

NELA's unemployment, declining from 9% to 7.21% (2010-2019), remains above the city's 6.47% average, with Cypress Park experiencing a 35% rise and now having the highest rate. Educational attainment varies, with NELA boasting 5% more bachelor's degree holders but also 25% more residents without a high school education compared to the city average. Workforce trends impact financial, housing, and food security, with Cypress Park differing from Eagle Rock, Atwater Village, and Elysian Valley, which have lower unemployment, higher education, and higher median household income.

NELA Opportunity Youth			
Neighborhood	2010 (%)	2019 (%)	Percent Change
Aggregated Total	12.7%	11.7%	-7.9%
Chinatown	12.1%	19.2%	59.3%
Lincoln Heights	15.0%	17.3%	15.5%
Cypress Park	14.1%	14.5%	2.7%
Highland Park	15.9%	13.2%	-17.1%
Mount Washington	15.7%	11.9%	-24.4%
Glassell Park	15.7%	11.2%	-28.8%
Elysian Park	16.1%	9.7%	-39.4%
Elysian Valley	16.1%	9.7%	-39.9%
El Sereno	9.5%	9.4%	-1.5%
Montecito Heights	10.2%	9.4%	-8.5%
Atwater Village	10.7%	8.9%	-16.9%
Eagle Rock	7.9%	6.7%	-15.8%

Graphic by UCLA.

To ensure economic stability, policies and programs must expand educational and trade opportunities, especially in neighborhoods with a high percentage of Opportunity Youth (youth ages 16 to 24 who are not working or in school). NELA averages 12% Opportunity Youth, with higher rates in Chinatown (19%), Lincoln Heights (17%), and Cypress Park (15%). Chinatown saw a 60% increase in Opportunity Youth since 2010, a trend worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic across almost all neighborhoods.

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“Youth education and youth opportunities are a priority. Youth must be involved in imagining, developing, building, and sustaining infrastructure that helps create a climate-resilient community and environment, and I want to see more partnering with colleges for local certificate programs for youth and others in the community.”

Individual Training

Individual workforce development is vital, necessitating accessible training programs, career workshops, and tools for navigating online job searches, especially for the 15% of non-English speakers in NELA. Collaborations with local organizations can enhance job training, providing essential skills and coaching. Community workforce centers, such as the City of LA's Economic and Workforce Development Department's (EWDD) 16 WorkSource centers, offer multilingual support. Near Taylor Yard, the Northeast Los Angeles WorkSource Center provides workshops and resources, aiding residents in financial management and interviews, alongside one-on-one counseling. Diverse training programs cater to high-demand sectors, expanding job prospects.

Small Businesses Support and Economic Development

Small businesses are vital community assets, providing jobs and essential services. The COVID-19 pandemic hit them hard, with LAEDC reporting nearly half closed in April 2021 and a 28.6% decline in open businesses across Los Angeles. Larger “small” companies received more aid than micro-enterprises, resulting in job losses and a slow recovery, with 392,000 living wage jobs lost in LA County.¹⁴

Though federal and state aid programs such as the Restaurant Revitalization Fund have ended, Los Angeles’ Microenterprise Recovery Grant continues, offering up to \$5,000 for COVID-19 expenses. Like many publicly-funded programs, success and uptake hinge on accessible information, robust outreach efforts, and assistance for interested participants. Targeted support initiatives such as LA’s Good Food Zone designation address areas lacking healthy food options. Models like LA Mās’s regenerative economy approach prioritize community ownership and participation, empowering residents through co-op creation and decision-making. Simplifying business startup procedures and providing support, including language-accessible information and sector-specific programs, can encourage local entrepreneurship. Programs such as SEE-LA’s Seasoned Accelerator¹⁵ and LACI’s Founders Business Accelerator offer mentorship and guidance for business development.¹⁶

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

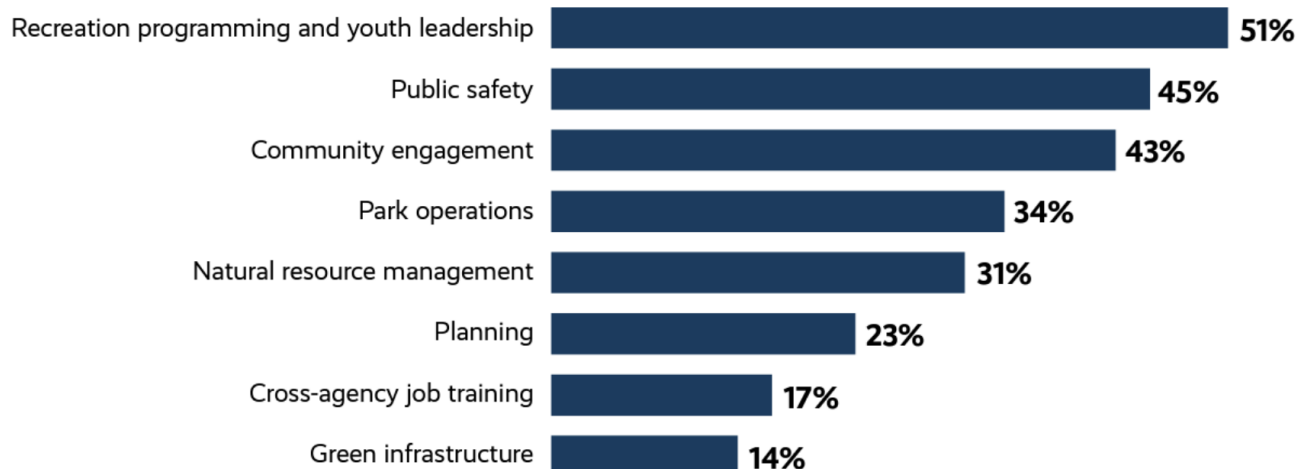
“Give paid opportunities to care for land. Provide accessible and paid training for future generations, strengthening the economic stability of long-time residents and working-class residents in Northeast LA through strategies like universal basic income and college readiness.”

Park Development

Parks can drive economic development and create career opportunities in management, programming,

Park and Recreation Agencies Expose Youth and Young Adults to a Wide Range of Jobs

(Percent of Agencies That Currently Offer a Workforce Development/Career Exploration Program)



14 Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, *Pathways for Economic Resiliency: Los Angeles County 2021 - 2026* (Los Angeles County: Los Angeles County, 2021), wdacs.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Pathways-for-Economic-Resiliency-Executive-Summary-copy.pdf.

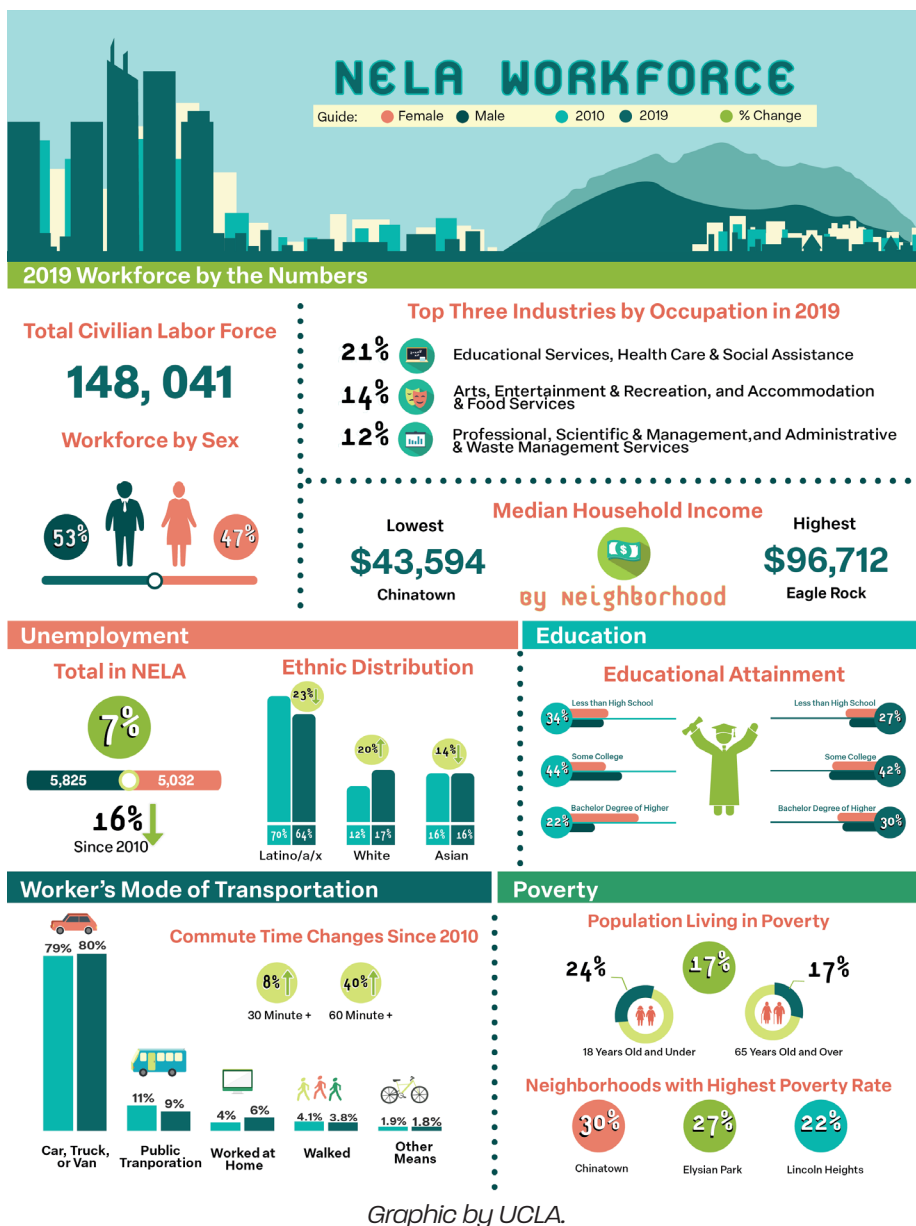
15 “Seasoned Accelerator,” Food Access Los Angeles, accessed August 6, 2024, foodaccessla.org/seasoned-accelerator.

16 “Founders Business Accelerator (FBA),” Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator, accessed August 6, 2024, lincubator.org/fba.

maintenance, and environmental stewardship. These jobs should offer competitive compensation and career growth opportunities. A National Recreation and Parks Association survey found that one-third of parks offer workforce development programs, with over 50% of urban parks participating compared to 24% of rural parks.¹⁷ About 90% of park leaders partner with outside organizations for program implementation, focusing on skills such as first aid, horticulture, and green infrastructure. Key goals include

VOICES OF NORTHEAST LA RESIDENTS & ORGANIZERS

“Water safety and climate and environment education for kids of all ages, including 18-year-olds, to learn more about these topics. We need programs to be affordable and instead pay youth to participate. Involve youth in how to help their communities, to help them gain leadership and skills. Create jobs that allow youth to excel and grow in their roles.”



providing youth with first jobs, cultivating diverse staff, expanding programming, and creating economic opportunities.¹⁸

The Biden Administration's American Climate Corps¹⁹ aims to train and employ 20,000 young people in clean energy and conservation jobs, focusing on underserved communities.²⁰ California has the California Conservation Corps,²¹ and programs such as the youth internship at Golden Gate National Parks

¹⁷ National Recreation and Parks Association. *Workforce Development and Career Exploration in Parks and Recreation* (Ashburn: NRPA, 2021), www.nrpa.org/contentassets/c2e4bf8e532c40bc919b143be6aaf935/2021-workforcedevreport.pdf.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The White House. "FACT SHEET: Biden-Harris Administration Launches American Climate Corps to Train Young People in Clean Energy, Conservation, and Climate Resilience Skills, Create Good-Paying Jobs and Tackle the Climate Crisis." State-ments and Releases. September 20, 2023. www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/20/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-launches-american-climate-corps-to-train-young-people-in-clean-energy-conservation-and-climate-resilience-skills-create-good-paying-jobs-and-tackle-the-clima/

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "California Conservation Corps," California Conservation Corps, accessed August 6, 2024, ccc.ca.gov.

Conservancy²² educate diverse interns about park programming and natural systems, prioritizing underserved communities.

Parks can also support economic development through infrastructure for vending and commerce through events such as festivals and markets, implementing pro-vending policies, and ensuring that the physical infrastructure supports vendors to boost small business access and income from parks.

Other Areas for Equity Action

While housing stability and workforce development were articulated as central priorities in community engagement efforts, community members described other potential priority areas, including **transportation, arts and culture, recreation, and community safety**.

Transportation

Current NELA residents need more robust and connected transportation options to meet their basic needs. Public transportation improvements should prioritize pedestrian routes, and street and sidewalk conditions should be made safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Despite proposed multi-modal transportation investments, community members emphasized that parking should still be prioritized.

Art, Culture, and Recreation

Residents would like to see dedicated gathering spaces for art, culture, and active recreation that is culturally relevant to adjacent communities, financially affordable or free, and brings enrichment activities for youth of color and working-class youth. Amenities should accommodate the diversity of park users by providing shade, seating, culturally representative art and educational signage, opportunities for community food-growing, and a multi-purpose community center. Community members would like to be prominently involved in the design processes.

Community Safety

Residents described a desire to divert resources from punitive enforcement (fines, fees, policing) and instead invest in community-building, centering the needs and concerns of undocumented residents, unhoused community members, vendors, people with diverse accessibility needs, youth, and elders within NELA.

22 Asima Jansveld et al., *Embedding Equity in Public Space* (New York City: The High Line Network, 2022), toolkit.highline-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/HighLineNetwork-CommunityFirstToolkit.pdf.

Strategic Opportunities

Through early engagement with residents, we heard concerns about environmental issues, housing, economic pressures, and public health inequities, with housing, homelessness, and economic fairness being top concerns. As an initial step, we explored potential strategic opportunities to address these issues with the intent to explore and develop these opportunities further in collaboration with other partners.

Opportunity #1: Establish and Resource a Community Guidance Panel

A Community Guidance Panel (CGP) would be a standing group made up of local residents and stakeholders. CGP members would be empowered to give key input on outreach, policies, programs, and expenditures for TYES planning and implementation. CGP members would help ensure that community priorities remain at the forefront of TYES work and in the implementation of the park and restoration projects of the 100 Acre Partnership. A CGP's strength would be solidified by the commitment and intention of the 100 Acre Partnership and other agency actors to center the CGP's input in planning and execution.

One local example of a similar community input body includes: [Measure ULA](#) has an initial group of fifteen Oversight Committee members, made up of thirteen voting members and two advisory members to support youth leadership development. The ULA Citizen Oversight Committee receives dedicated staffing support and compensation for meeting attendance, resourced by Measure ULA.

Tags: Community Power, Transparency

Opportunity #2: Create Affordable Housing Supply

Investment in publicly-led projects and partnerships with nonprofits, land trusts, and other community-based housing developers should explore public and social housing opportunities, mixed-income cooperative housing, resident-led housing collectives, community land trusts, and other permanent affordable housing models that give the community control of housing. Practitioner partners in this space include CLTs, such as El Sereno Community Land Trust and Los Angeles Chinatown Community Land Trust, as well as NELACHA, a working group addressing housing stability for working-class people of color. NELACHA partners with renters, property owners, and housing experts to create community-stewarded, permanently affordable housing. They seek to leverage public funds such as Measure ULA and the State's Foreclosure Intervention Housing Program (FIHPP) for housing acquisition and development, using tenant and private funds to bridge financing gaps.

Tags: Housing, Stabilization

Opportunity #3: Empower Residents Toward Housing Security and Home Ownership

In addition to increasing the supply of available units, steps can be taken to empower residents toward better housing security and paths to homeownership, including through rights-based and financial resource training. Strategies can involve a variety of approaches across education, policy, and financial support, such as:

- Homebuyer education programs to help community members learn about ways to enter the market, secure financing, and source assistance.
- Homebuyers clubs that help with closing costs and down payments.
- Advocacy for the passing of a LA Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (LA TOPA), which would allow renters to make the first offer on their building if it is put up for sale.
- Tenant rights education to help renters understand the many existing protections and resources to stay secure in their homes.
- Training and a public awareness campaign on utilizing existing anti-displacement tools in LA and expanding community ownership strategies.

Tags: Housing, Stabilization, Education, Renters, Community Power

Opportunity #4: Act Directly to Prevent Displacement of Renters

Central to the potential of TYES work are policies and programs to allow existing residents who rent to remain and thrive in their neighborhoods. To stabilize and empower existing renters vulnerable to displacement, residents called for rental assistance, strengthening rent control and anti-harassment ordinances, eviction defense efforts, tenant rights education, and a housing mutual aid network to be resourced in NELA. TYES could help identify support for community-based organizations and tenant rights partners to develop these programs, leveraging their existing trust and networks.

Support partnerships between local tenant networks in NELA and regional tenant rights experts to conduct an in-depth anti-displacement analysis and develop targeted strategies for tenant protections and stability. Residents expressed a need for clear, NELA-specific displacement avoidance plans and more detailed information on neighborhood vulnerabilities to displacement and gentrification, particularly in areas including Chinatown, Cypress Park, Glassell Park, Highland Park, Lincoln Heights, Atwater Village, and Elysian Valley.

- Engage Northeast LATU organizers, who have extensive experience in tenant organizing in the area, in anti-displacement efforts for TYES. Tools to track new developments and early signs of evictions or sales, could enable organizers to strategize for acquisition and preservation opportunities and new developments in the community.
- Invest in NELA's housing mutual aid network and rental assistance program. Residents need ongoing support to assist tenants with paperwork and rights protection, especially during rent shortfalls. Initiatives such as the LA Federation of Labor's People's Project demonstrate the effectiveness of mutual aid networks.
- Expand legal defense services through collaboration with partners such as Stay Housed LA, a joint initiative of the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, and local providers that offer crucial

resources to prevent eviction, including tenant education and legal assistance for issues such as safety violations and illegal evictions.

Tags: Housing, Stabilization, Renters

Opportunity #5: Enact Innovative Anti-Displacement Policies

Opportunities exist to develop a variety of anti-displacement policies, whether by City, County or State government. Policy development is a complicated process that involves many voices, but strong policy can be hugely impactful. Some areas of potential policy work include:
Develop and implement no-net loss of affordable housing protections alongside park development.
Ensuring the Northeast LA Community Plan update process addresses TYES priorities.
Establishing anti-gentrification zones.

Tags: Policy, Housing, Stabilization

Opportunity #6: Promote a Care-First Approach for Unhoused Residents

Community feedback during TYES outreach highlighted NELA residents' compassionate stance toward unhoused individuals. Residents prioritize dedicated supportive housing, interim shelters, and increased safe spaces that integrate housing and resources into broader community infrastructure and prioritize the safety and comfort of unhoused residents. More shelter and permanent housing options are needed for unhoused residents in Northeast LA, focusing on low-barrier access and comprehensive services. Councilwoman Eunisses Hernandez celebrated the opening of Northeast New Beginnings in Cypress Park in January 2024, addressing these needs. This innovative interim shelter accommodates up to 95 residents, offering various unit sizes, essential amenities, and comprehensive on-site services, including counseling, meals, employment placement, and healthcare, marking a significant step in meeting the community's demands.

Local partners could include The Silver Lake, Echo Park, Los Feliz, Atwater Village, and Hollywood Neighborhood Homeless Coalition (SELAH NHC); LA Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA); The People Concern; [Food Justice Collaborative](#) organized by LA Más; and mutual aid groups like [Neno Collective](#) and [LA Street Care](#).

Tags: Housing, Homelessness

Opportunity #7: Support Legacy Small Businesses

Issues of affordability are also impacting local businesses and workers, who also need affordable and stable spaces to conduct business. Residents felt this unaffordability disproportionately impacted working-class, monolingual speakers. Residents want to see local small businesses stay and have economic stability and growth. They also want to see local businesses and community services hire from the local community, which has the potential to solve multiple challenges faced by NELA workers.

Potential partners and pathways in this opportunity area include:

- **Connect small business owners at risk of displacement with legal aid support and resources.** Residents want to see rights for local businesses that rent, such as commercial rent stabilization policies and tenant protections to prevent displacement of legacy small businesses that serve the community but are vulnerable to rising rents. For immediate support to prevent displacement, identify small businesses at risk of gentrification and work with partners that provide legal support and counseling for small businesses, such as Inclusive Action for the City (Inclusive Action) and the LA Regional Small Business Legal Aid Program.
- **The LA Regional Small Business Legal Aid Program** connects small business owners in LA to legal experts who provide training and support on commercial lease rights and other aspects of business law.
- **SEE-LA's Seasoned Accelerator** program helps small food businesses navigate the process of business development through a combination of one-on-one mentorship and training.
- **The Center by Lendistry** provides training, education, and support to small businesses to access contracts with the public sector and anchor institutions, build and implement a digital growth strategy, and guidance to apply for flexible capital through Lendistry.
- **LISC LA's Asset-Building for Communities of Color (ABC)** program, which provides flexible capital to BIPOC business owners.
- **The City of LA's Economic & Workforce Development Department's Business Source Centers**, which provide no-cost services to small business owners.
- **Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI)** provides a model for training and strategic guidance for microenterprises and small businesses to continue their growth.
- **Learn from and leverage place-based programs that target disadvantaged communities to support small businesses and entrepreneurs through services, technical assistance, and incentives.** TYES could help support small businesses and mutual aid food efforts in Northeast LA, and leverage lessons and programs from the City of LA's Good Food Zone pilot program and the Jobs & Economic Development Incentive (JEDI) Zones program where there is opportunity.

Tags: Small Business

Opportunity #8: Support Job and Skill Training Programs

Community members should be supported in training for good jobs across a variety of fields to help strengthen their economic security and long-term stability in their home neighborhoods. Investing in local partnerships is key to creating jobs for residents in NELA, including youth, immigrants, non-English speakers, and long-time locals with limited economic resources.

Community TYES work can bolster a web of local job training by connecting with City programs such as Clean LA and River Rangers for green jobs and workforce development. Partnerships with groups like the LA Conservation Corps and Flintridge Center could offer apprenticeships in conservation and construction trades. Partnerships with academic institutions and private-sector firms could lead to training and apprenticeships in design, project management, and policy.

Collaborating with local workforce organizations, such as Northeast Los Angeles WorkSource Center and LA:RISE, could be crucial for providing training and services to NELA residents to ensure resources are coupled with navigation and assistance to residents. Programs such as the River Fellows Green Workforce Development by Friends of the Los Angeles River can help youth learn about STEM and

conservation, tackling economic insecurity and offering job opportunities.

Tags: Workforce, Education

Opportunity #9: Hire Local Residents to Build, Operate, and Program 100 Acre Partnership Projects

Building on Opportunity #8, Taylor Yard's park development can benefit community members by directly providing quality full-time employment opportunities, creating other economic opportunities, and supporting community-serving and culturally relevant businesses that can provide living wage jobs. While traditionally “workforce development” focuses on individualized worker training, it can encompass support for existing businesses and business development. It can also include policies and programs aimed at helping residents become financially secure through policies and programs such as increased minimum wages and universal basic income. When combined, these policies can increase the economic resiliency of long-term residents.

Developing specific strategies to enhance workforce and economic development, particularly for immigrants, is a priority for residents. They advocate for neighborhood hiring for quality jobs and services to overcome barriers to employment. Parks can play a proactive role by implementing first-source hiring programs, ensuring local residents and community labor receive preference for jobs and contracts. Similarly, development-based Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs), such as the one established for the Staples Center in Los Angeles in 2001, can secure concessions for impacted communities, such as affordable housing and economic opportunities. TYES could collaborate with local partners to promote the [City of LA's First Source Hiring Ordinance](#) and develop specific strategies to maximize opportunities for Northeast LA residents and small businesses, including those related to the development, maintenance, and programming of the 100-Acre Park through a Community Workforce Agreement, which could include specific requirements for local hiring, wages, and labor practices to ensure benefits to the community.

The 100 Acre Partnership intends to hire local residents to participate in project development and several members of the local community have already been hired into well-paying community engagement jobs on the project. The project intends to develop models and practices to provide paid work for local residents in technical fields such as design and project management.

Tags: Workforce, Education, Jobs

Opportunity #10: Establish a Taylor Yard Project Labor Agreement

The 100 Acre Partnership agencies have an opportunity to elevate union construction jobs to ensure living wages and career advancement opportunities for NELA residents. One way to do this is to enter into a Project Labor Agreement (PLA) with trade unions. In PLAs, project proponents partner with trade unions to commit to specific practices in hiring for major construction endeavors. For example, the Port of Long Beach's PLA includes stipulations such as 40% of worked hours must be by local hires and 10% must be done by veterans and other transitional workers.²³ PLAs often include targets

²³ “New PLA Paves Way For Port Infrastructure,” Port of Long Beach, March 28, 2023, polb.com/port-info/news-and-press/pla-paves-way-for-port-infrastructure-03-28-2023/.

for local hiring and training and a Taylor Yard PLA could be a strong vehicle to take action in TYES opportunity areas. A PLA has been developed for construction of the SELA Cultural Center on the LA River in Southeast LA. The City has joined a number of PLAs that can serve as models for Taylor Yard, as have other local agencies such as LA Metro and Los Angeles County.

Tags: Workforce, Jobs

Opportunity #11: Patronize Legacy Community Vendors, Businesses, and Artisans

As Taylor Yard projects are built and operated, many opportunities will arise to support local community business and individuals who offer food, design, materials, and other services. Buying from these legacy businesses, whenever possible, is a simple and direct way that the 100 Acre Partnership agencies could promote trust, support economic stability, and build relationships.

Regenerative Economies is an LA Más program that centers care, cooperation, and ecological restoration. This program includes *Community-serving Entrepreneurs*, in partnership with Inclusive Action for the City, which is creating an ecosystem to support local entrepreneurs and vendors – home cooks, artists, translators, and builders – providing services and support that allows greater agency and power.

Tags: Small Business, Park Operations, Events

Opportunity #12: Enable New Business Opportunities for Legacy Residents and Local Entrepreneurs

Local parks can drive a regenerative economy through food, art, education, and land and food justice opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs, artists, and indigenous communities. Residents are eager for TYES to help create local jobs, support community-serving entrepreneurs, and facilitate food justice initiatives and mutual aid efforts. NELA residents emphasize the need for economic opportunities that support community members vulnerable to rent hikes and gentrification. They advocate for a social solidarity economy with tailored solutions for youth, elders, micro-entrepreneurs (including home-based and street vendors), the undocumented community, and non-English speakers. They seek pathways for informal entrepreneurs and home-based businesses to access commercial space through food carts, food business incubators, pop-ups, and vendor markets with fewer regulatory barriers.

Park designers can implement policies and build amenities that foster economic opportunities within parks, such as increased vendor access and income, limited fees, ensured compensation, adequate gathering areas, and access to water and power.

Northeast LA has strong community solidarity and regenerative economic models. TYES could collaborate with local libraries and nonprofits for training and education and work with the Food Justice Collaborative, led by LA Más and Inclusive Action, to champion street vendors' rights and support entrepreneurs with seed funds. Inclusive Action's LA Street Vendor Campaign and Adopt-A-Lot initiative transform vacant lots for community benefit.

If the 100 Acre Park included a food cart hub, a community-shared kitchen, vendor waste disposal, and a warehouse for produce, it could provide infrastructure that aligns with the vision of using the river to transform underutilized spaces for community benefit rather than generating profit for non-local businesses.

Tags: Small Business, Park Operations, Events

Opportunity #13: Improve Access, Active Transportation, and Transit Connections

Improved transit and mobility options that are affordable and accessible will help residents, especially elders and youth, to meet their basic needs, such as getting to parks, clinics, hospitals, supermarkets, and other surrounding communities, and the Metro Gold Line more easily. Equitable access to the 100 Acre Partnership area's open spaces and recreation features requires eliminating physical barriers within and around the park and improving walking and rolling routes to multiple entrances. Sufficient parking for events that will be hosted at the park could mean that fewer vehicles would spill into surrounding neighborhoods. The community is concerned about street safety, with many comments about how dangerous San Fernando Road is compared to Riverside, and the need for more traffic calming measures.

Tags: Mobility, Safety, Park Access

Opportunity #14: Healthy Local Environment

Residents want to be more involved in addressing environmental concerns and better informed about steps taken to address them, especially regarding the redevelopment of contaminated land at Taylor Yards. They hope to see a green space that supports wildlife and preserves sensitive species, promotes climate resilience, and incorporates green infrastructure with natural disaster exit points. Other concerns include pollution from trains, cars, and large trucks, and street cleanliness.

An inspiring local example of the kinds of education that could support these goals is the Climate Walk and Talk training program by Mujeres de la Tierra (MDLT). Founded in 2004, MDLT is a grassroots environmental equity nonprofit that builds community leadership among low-income, immigrant, communities of color. In partnership with Climate Resolve, MDLT trains community members across generations to measure noise pollution, air pollution, and temperature.

Tags: Environment, Heat, Health, Safety, Education

Opportunity #15: Community Engagement and Education

TYES and the 100 Acre Partnership could adopt guidelines for best practices in community engagement. LA County's Safe Clean Water Program has adopted such guidelines, informed by research and best practices.

A few key points surfaced from residents to guide future TYES and park development outreach strategies and strengthen the ability of community members to have their own voice in these processes: (1) the need for early and continuous community participation that leverages existing

community efforts instead of creating new efforts; (2) ensuring representative decision-making from the community considering those most impacted by the development; and (3) integrating existing community efforts into the fabric of the park. Feedback on outreach strategies included to provide for specific translation and interpretation needs for monolingual groups in the neighborhoods, strategies to engage older adults, and existing networks to collaborate with on outreach. Some other community recommendations included:

Community Engagement and Planning Processes

- Community engagement needs to happen early and be continuous
- Provide more organized efforts to bring local community together
- Planning processes for projects need simultaneous interpretation
- Look at what community is already resisting to inform what should and should not be integrated into park or equitable development strategies
- Spotlight community organizations and events at the park
- Integrate community outreach into the fabric of the park

Outreach Strategies for Hard-to-Reach Populations

- More effective outreach is needed to Asian and monolingual communities
- Canvassing and grassroots outreach are recommended strategies to reach community members and inform communities of local resources
- Use word-of-mouth, flyering, and utilize community bulletin boards to reach elderly and those without internet

Tags: Community Power, Education, Communication

Opportunity #16: History and Placemaking

There is strong interest in preserving NELA's and Taylor Yard's history for future generations through art and celebrations of iconic and sacred places that create a sense of home in Northeast LA. Residents want to be involved in the design and have art and cultural activities that represent all the diverse cultures of the community, including dedicated efforts to uplift Indigenous perspectives on land and stewardship.

Tags: Culture, Events

Opportunity #17: Affordable Recreation

Residents expressed a need for “canchas libres”—free recreational activities and free, open spaces to play sports. Taylor Yard's programming should eliminate barriers for accessing park spaces, recreational activities, and other community resources and make efforts to ensure that affordable youth sports, childcare, English, and other classes are available.

Tags: Recreation, Youth, Events, Park Operations

Opportunity #18: Community-Oriented Design

Residents want to see the park and public spaces in NELA designed in ways that promote a sense of responsibility to place and are historically and culturally relevant and welcoming for all. They also want public spaces and recreational activities to be designed to meet the needs of vulnerable communities now and into the future, including more shade and multipurpose spaces where Indigenous people can hold ceremonies and community members can gather.

Tags: Community Power, Communication

Opportunity #19: Community Respect and Cultural Competence

NELA residents also acknowledged the complexity of balancing the needs of long-time and new residents in the TYES interviews and outreach at community events, and a desire to make Northeast LA inclusive and welcoming for all residents, past, present, and future. Residents need park staff who are culturally competent, inclusive, diverse linguistically, and trained to be welcoming so that all community members can access community services and feel welcome at the park.

Language is one place to begin to make progress on cultural competence, and initial outreach work informed areas of potential improvement. Language barriers have an impact on workforce entry, and impede longtime residents in Northeast LA experience in finding quality jobs and accessing community resources. Also, better translation services are needed at the parks, libraries, and other community resource points; better language capability will help create inclusivity and responsiveness to community needs. Residents specifically suggested translation and interpretation needs, including:

- Better translation services overall at parks, libraries, local events
- Simultaneous interpretation for non-English speakers at public planning meetings
- Translation specifically for Chinese (including Mandarin), Filipino/Tagalog, Cambodian/Khmer, and Thai
- Materials should not just be translated but conveyed in common language to ensure understanding

In addition to resolving language barriers, it will serve all residents of Taylor Yard communities if forthcoming park projects ensure that local cultural expression is foregrounded.

Tags: Culture, Events, Communication

Opportunity #20: Fun!

Shared joyful experiences are at the center of the benefits park spaces bring to communities. TYES work must engage on challenging topics and help support residents through difficulties, but at the same time, opportunities for play and wonder must also be emphasized as intrinsic to supporting an entire spectrum of human needs.

Tags: Culture, Recreation, Events, Park Operations

Lessons Learned

Ownership and Leadership

Recognizing who controls the land in park development projects is crucial. The entity in charge often leads equitable community development strategies, simplifying and clarifying efforts, and is essential for grant opportunities that require land control.

In cases where different organizations lead park development and adjacent community development, collaboration becomes even more critical. The Community TYES Initiative falls into the second category with government agencies in the 100 Acre Partnership controlling the land and a community-based collaborative leading the equitable community development strategies. While maintaining this collaboration can be challenging and requires intentional effort, TYES is demonstrating that it can be an effective way to achieve equity goals.

Funding

In the best of all possible worlds for a project like TYES, enough funding would be in place to support several years of planning and organizing – and to pilot first actions. This level of work likely require about \$750,000 in annual funding for several years. But, funding at that scale was not available to launch TYES work. TYES began with about \$500,000 and the faith that more money could be raised. Using a staggered approach to funding made the first phase of work challenging, knowing that funding would run out before we were able to publish a full first version of the TYES plan. This approach also meant that the TYES team had to spend a significant amount of time on attempts to raise more funding.

However, we knew that TYES work needed to begin at the first moment feasible, and as early in the physical development of the park project as possible. While difficult, the immediacy of engagement outweighed the need for certainty in funding.

After several unsuccessful applications to grant programs for additional funding, in 2022 (former) Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo secured a \$1.5 million direct appropriation from the State of California for the next phases of the Community TYES Initiative. This allocation validated the TYES team's leap of faith to launch the project, and will ensure that work continues.

Thinking Regionally

Navigate jurisdictional complexities: It is important to recognize the challenges posed by jurisdictional boundaries in park efforts, which impact funding, management, and programming. Despite these challenges, jurisdictional boundaries can also serve as catalysts for advancing supportive and progressive policies. Cities may consider adopting policies enacted by neighboring jurisdictions, such as stricter rent control ordinances,²⁴ to address housing affordability issues. With more than 140 plans associated with the LA River spanning multiple jurisdictions, continued coordination is essential to navigate competing interests and ensure alignment with community needs and preferences.

24 Charlotte Kramon, "Southeast L.A. County cities enact rent control to keep residents housed," *Los Angeles Times*, August 14, 2023, www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2023-08-14/can-rent-control-save-southeast-communities.

Prioritize regional coordination: Regional coordination is necessary to ensure community-driven design, management, funding, and access for park projects. With more than 140 plans associated with the LA River spanning multiple jurisdictions, continued coordination is essential to navigate competing interests and ensure alignment with community needs and preferences. Revitalization projects along the LA River, for example, require coordination among multiple city departments with overlapping jurisdictions, competing interests, and diverging views of site usage. This coordination involves entities including the City of LA, like LA County, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the LA Police Department, and the California Department of Public Health, indicating the complexity of managing projects across jurisdictions.^{25 26}

Leverage multiple funding channels: It is essential to acknowledge the potential to leverage various funding channels for park projects. Although this piecemeal approach can be difficult, it is the only way most park and community development projects succeed.

Cross-Sector Partnerships

Establish collaborative partnerships: It takes a village of collaborative partnerships for successful park and community development projects, drawing on the strengths and resources of multiple stakeholders. This collaborative approach, as highlighted by an evaluation of the Link model by the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation, underlines the importance of this model for community-driven planning.

Understand bandwidth and capacity: We have to recognize the limited resources and time constraints faced by community-based organizations, which may impact their capacity to program, organize, research, advocate, and deliver services. To address these limitations, park development projects should compensate CBOs for their time and effort and involve a diverse range of stakeholders, including academic or professional researchers, community-based organizations, local government actors, organizers, and advocacy organizations, to supplement and strengthen community-based efforts.

Address challenges in project management: Project management can be tricky when one has to work across such diverse sectors, so it is important to acknowledge potential challenges in project management due to the diverse nature of community-based organizations, including differences in size, politics, constituencies, and needs, as well as government and non-governmental partners. To mitigate these challenges, collaborations should establish guiding principles, operating norms, modes of communication, and responsibilities. This approach can help ensure support for individual members and alignment towards a shared vision of success.

Empower community involvement in planning: It is essential to recognize the importance of direct community involvement in planning processes. While collaborations with institutions are valuable, engagement efforts must also prioritize the active participation of community members in shaping the strategic direction and governance of park and community development projects.

25 Larry Gordon, "Economy, Modernization Quiet Railyard," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 1985, www.newspapers.com/article/the-los-angeles-times/131915122/.

26 Phil Sneiderman, "County Agency Admits It Should Have Told About Plan to Buy Glassell Park Land," *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 1991.

Next Steps

In subsequent phases, the Community TYES Initiative will grow, evolve, and build on the strategies identified in this initial phase. The partners will continue to push for greater community voice and power in NELA by facilitating collaboration, research, and action including community members, organizations, and public sector agencies.

Conclusion

Community TYES initial outreach highlights Northeast LA's strengths and residents' active role in shaping solutions that honor local culture and community efforts. Their vision extends beyond economic gains to ensure park project benefits stay within neighborhoods and are shared broadly. Through extensive engagement, Community TYES has identified leaders, priorities, challenges, and strategies to address environmental burdens, housing shortages, economic disparities, and public health inequities. Residents aspire for Northeast LA to grow without displacing long-standing residents, emphasizing affordable housing and an economy that prioritizes social solidarity.

As Community TYES moves forward, collaborations must continue building trust, fostering partnerships, and addressing capacity limitations. Specific efforts must include engaging Indigenous and community leaders and incorporating ongoing evaluation and feedback mechanisms. Looking ahead, Community TYES aims to implement equitable development strategies, address risks of green gentrification and displacement and strengthen solidarity ecosystems. We believe this approach can help redress historical injustices and build a future where all residents can flourish.

Acknowledgements & Gratitude

Community TYES recognizes Northeast LA as the ancestral lands of the Gabrielino/Tongva and Kiche people, acknowledging displacement of Indigenous and former residents. We aim to honor Indigenous sovereignty and collaborate with present and emerging Indigenous and local residents for concrete action supporting community history, sovereignty, and culture.

This report stems from Community TYES efforts, which involved reviewing public plans, interviewing 34 community members, participating in events, and hosting workshops to understand equitable development needs. Gratitude is extended to all contributors, especially interviewees, who represent Northeast LA's diverse voices.

We also recognize public agencies, community initiatives, and nonprofits contributing to community development. This report is made possible by financial and resource support from organizations including Resources Legacy Fund, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering, United States Environmental Protection Agency, LA ROSAH Collaborative, Trust for Public Land, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Strong, Prosperous, And Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC), and the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability at UCLA.

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Office of Senator Maria Elena Durazo, CA Senate District 26
Office of US Representative Jimmy Gomez, CA District 34
Office of Mayor Karen Bass, City of Los Angeles
Office of Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez, City of Los Angeles
Office of Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martínez, City of Los Angeles
Department of Water and Power, City of Los Angeles
Bureau of Engineering, City of Los Angeles
Accion Comunitaria
Alliance of River Communities
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Cypress Park Neighborhood Council
LA ROSAH (Regional Open Space and Affordable Housing) Collaborative
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Friends of the LA River (FoLAR)
LA County District 1, Office of Supervisor Hilda Solis
LA Neighborhood Land Trust
LA Más
LeSar Development Consultants
Mobility Justice
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
Mujeres de la Tierra
Natural Resources Defense Council
Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles (PSR-LA)
Resources Legacy Fund
Southeast Asian Community Alliance
Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE)
The Nature Conservancy
Tenemos que Reclamar y Unidos Salvar la Tierra South LA (T.R.U.S.T. South LA)
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FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

We could not have undertaken this research or initiative without the leadership, generous funding, and in-kind support provided by the following partners:

The City of Los Angeles
The City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
The City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering
Trust for Public Land
Resources Legacy Fund
UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability
LeSar Development Consultants
Natural Resources Defense Council
Southeast Asian Community Alliance
Holos Communities
Tenemos que Reclamar y Unidos Salvar la Tierra-South LA (T.R.U.S.T. South LA)

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: [UCLA Report: “Taylor Yard: A Case Study” \(2024\)](#)
Appendix B: [TYES Pre-launch Strategy Session Summary \(2023\)](#)

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