Introduction to CivicSpark

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Local Government Commission

Agenda

- Overview of CivicSpark

- Application Process & Timeline

- Questions

What is CivicSpark?

- Governor's Initiative AmeriCorps program.

- Dedicated to building public sector resilience capacity.

- Inaugurated in 2014-15 service year.

- Places Fellows across California to support local projects.

- Projects support emerging environmental and social equity challenges.

Why Capacity Building?

- Well-being depends on community resilience.

- CA faces widespread and persistent challenges.

- The state has set ambitious goals

- Resilience depends on local government planning and implementation.

- Local governments lack necessary "resilience capacity" to respond.
    - *Limited Resources.*
    - *Unprecedented threats.*
    - *Need for integration.*
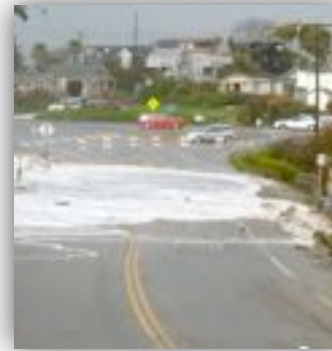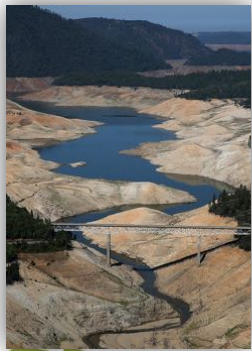
What do We Mean by Resilience?

- A community's ability to thrive in the face of turbulent environmental and social equity disruptions;

  - *Minimizing negative impacts to all;*

  - *Capitalizing on opportunities for all;*

  - *Preserving ecosystem health and services for all.*
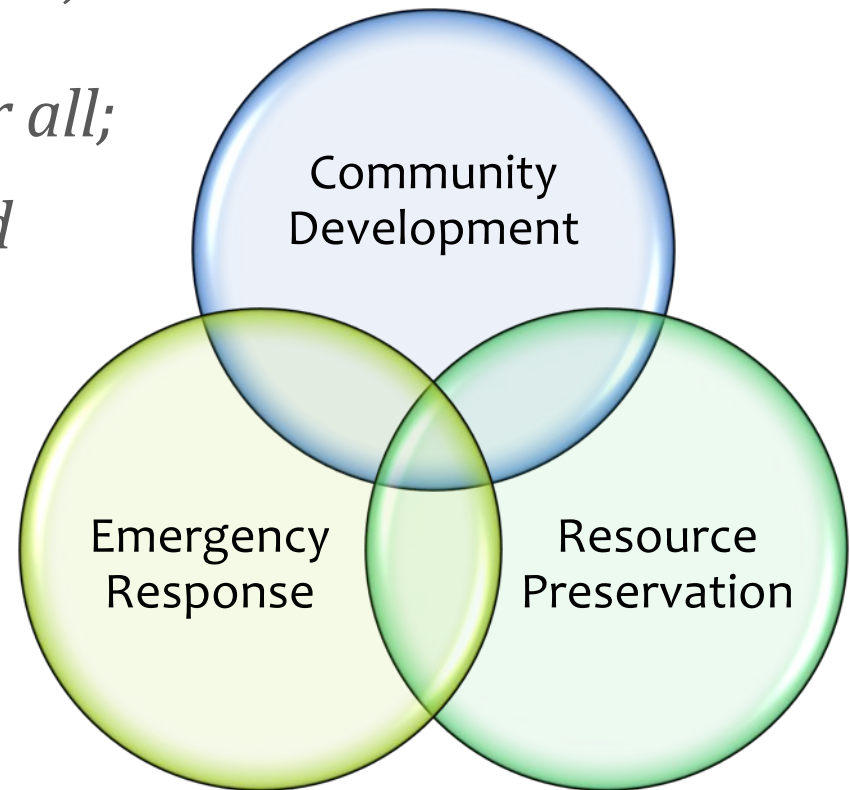
LGC is the overall Program Manager for CivicSpark.

- Local Government Commission is a 501 (c)3 not-for-profit organization with nearly 40 years experience identifying and championing local governments who are or want to be sustainability leaders.

- LGC manages CivicSpark:
  - Link between local governments and Fellow support
  - Fellow recruiting, hiring, and support
  - Program infrastructure
  - Fellows training
  - Performance Goals

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Leaders for Livable Communities

Partnership with the Governor's Office leverages state resources and support.

- Resilience and Economic Opportunity were major priorities for Governor Brown, and are now for Governor Newsom.

- CivicSpark creates support for local & regional initiatives.

- OPR links local governments to availabl tools and state goals.

- CivicSpark successes are shared throughout the state.

The CivicSpark team is a partnership between multiple parties.

- **Corporation for National and Community Service**
  - Federal agency; manages all national service programs.
  - California Volunteers; manages state service programs.

- **CivicSpark AmeriCorps Fellows**
  - College graduates with relevant experience.
  - On the ground direct service to local agencies.

- **Local Partners**
  - Host and/or supervise Fellows project work.
  - Identify projects, receive support, provide funding match.
  - Local public agencies, NGOs, regional collaboratives.

"Our CivicSpark Fellow is full of energy and optimism, and single-handedly re-energized efforts to educate the community on climate action."

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Fellows serve all over California.

■ Individual or teams of Fellows.

■ Regions:
  ■ North Coast
  ■ Bay Area
  ■ Sacramento & Sierras
  ■ Central Inland
  ■ Central Coast
  ■ Greater LA
    ■ (includes San Diego & Inland Empire)

CivicSpark Fellows build capacity through four core activities.

Gap Assessments

- Fellows interview staff and review key documents to determine current resiliency needs relevant to their thematic track.
- Fellows use this info to finalize project goals and scope.

Service Projects

- Fellows complete specific research, planning, or implementation project(s).

Volunteer Engagement

- Fellows support increased volunteerism in conjunction with their project(s).

Transitioning Expertise

- Fellows sustain progress by providing training to staff and sharing results with key stakeholders.

"Without CivicSpark, climate planning would not be happening here!"

CivicSpark fellows are doing great work for their host agencies and communities.

- Climate Action Plan Implementation
  - Measures in more than 12 communities!

- Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program
  - Strengths and needs assessment, resources in Santa Ana River Watershed!

- Regional EV & Fuel Cells
  - Accelerating adoption of alternative fuels market in the North Coast!

- Sea Level Rise Adaptation
  - Research and adaptation plan for the City of Alameda!

- Water/Energy Nexus
  - Audits and savings in San Mateo County schools and public buildings!

- Affordable Housing & Sustainable Communities
  - Technical assistance for AHSC grant program!

CivicSpark is making a lasting impact throughout California.

- Over the past four years, CivicSpark Fellows provided more than 360,000 hours of service to over 170 public agencies through 350+ projects supporting a wide range of actions:
  - 22 vulnerability assessments;
  - 32 climate or energy action plans;
  - 97 water efficiency surveys
  - 134 climate action policies;
  - 155 energy reports and benchmarking assessment;
  - 280 community workshops;
  - 1,861 water monitoring surveys and reports;
  - Over 3 million gallons water saved;
  - And much more!

"Our CivicSpark Fellows have brought a fresh perspective on how we engage the community in energy planning in the region, and they are not short on ambition."

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CivicSpark is leveraging resources to multiply impacts for California.

- Fellows directly engaged over 15,500 community members.

- Over 95% of completed projects met or exceeded goals.

- CivicSpark matches about $1.5 million annually in local funds.

Great Partnerships = Great Results!

In San Leandro, a Fellow created an **online engagement platform, GoGreenSL**

↓

The platform **supports resident engagement** in **local climate action** initiatives and **reduced environmental impact**

↓

50 local resources shared on the platform, **200 students** engaged, **278 households** registered.

Approach

↓

Benefits

↓

Results

In Sacramento, a Fellow managed ongoing **restoration of the Cordova Creek**,

↓

Naturalization of the creek **provides green space** to the community, **ecosystem benefits** to wildlife, and **access** to the American River bike trail.

↓

450+ native plants and **52 acorns** planted, **4 student groups** and **25 work crews** engaged, **14 stakeholder presentations** completed.

We look for strong CivicSpark partners:

- Tangible and impactful resiliency projects:
  - Clear, suitable scope of work;
  - Commitment to implementation;
  - Strong connection to public agencies need.

- Commitment to Fellows growth and development:
  - Direct project oversight;
  - Dedicated Fellow supervisor:
    - Determine Fellow's strengths,
    - Set professional goals,
    - Conduct performance assessments,
    - Provide development opportunities.

CivicSpark Public Agency Eligibility

Significant Community-Wide Burdens

- CalEnviroScreen >33;
- Distressed Community Index >50;
- Unemployment above state average;
- Regional Opportunity Index (People or Place) below state average.

Absence of an Adopted and/or Up-to-date Strategy

- Lack of a plan, element, etc. that comprehensively addresses the target resilience issue with appropriate funding, programs, and policies, to implement the strategy.

Defined Resilience Capacity Gap

- Evidenced by at least 1 significant program, policy, or planning goal for a specific resiliency issue that has not been /cannot be met without resource or system development assistance.
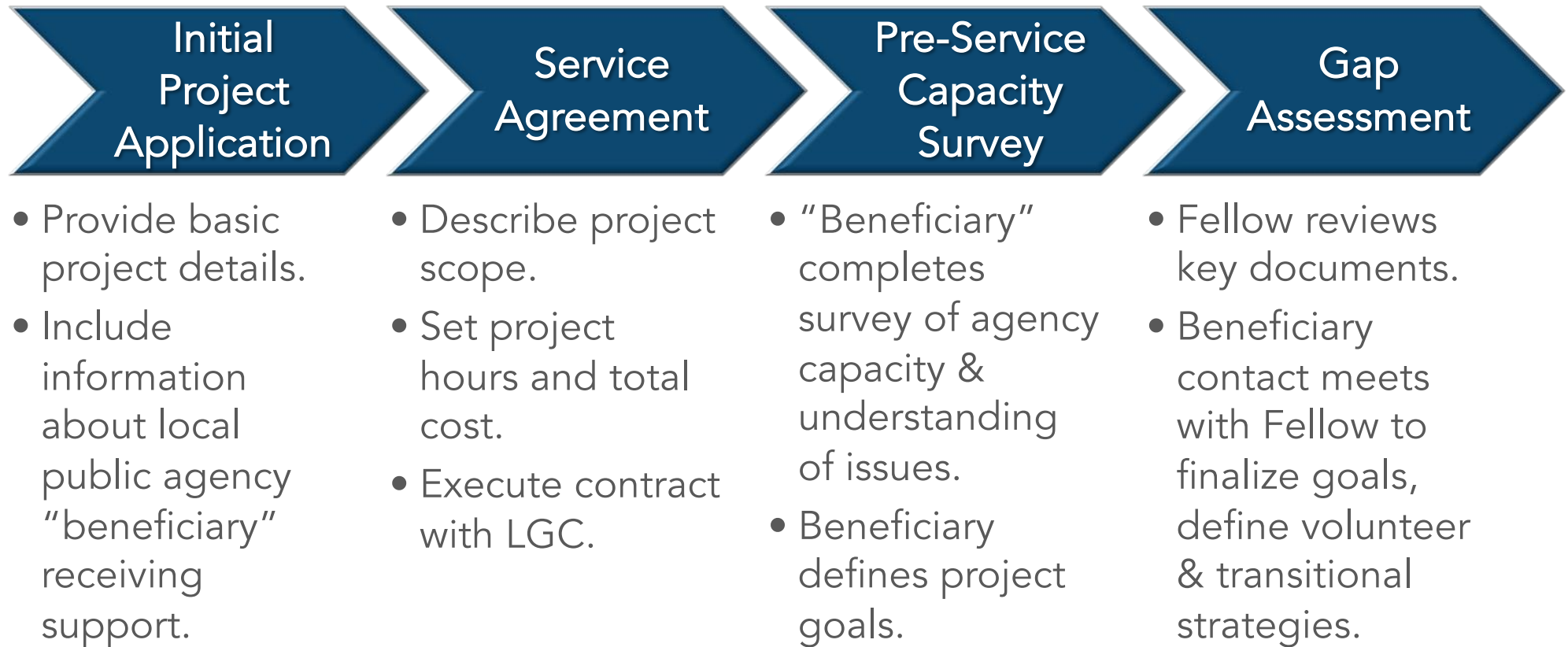
2019-20 Fiscal Contribution

- CivicSpark is funded by CNCS and Partner Match Funding.

Cost	Project Support	Additional Benefits
$51,000 / 2 Fellows	11 Months	160 project prep hours
	2,600+ Project Hours	200 volunteer engagement hours
$26,000 / 1 Fellow	11 Months	80 project prep hours
	1,300+ Project Hours	100 volunteer engagement hours

- NGOs and state agencies can contract directly with LGC for CivicSpark Fellows; projects must have a defined local agency "beneficiary."

Application & Project Startup Process

Initial Project Application

- Provide basic project details.
- Include information about local public agency "beneficiary" receiving support.

Service Agreement

- Describe project scope.
- Set project hours and total cost.
- Execute contract with LGC.

Pre-Service Capacity Survey

- "Beneficiary" completes survey of agency capacity & understanding of issues.
- Beneficiary defines project goals.

Gap Assessment

- Fellow reviews key documents.
- Beneficiary contact meets with Fellow to finalize goals, define volunteer & transitional strategies.

Is CivicSpark right for me?

- I am looking for a ...
  - Contractor?
  - Employee?
  - Fellow?
  - Intern?
  - Volunteer?

- I have...
  - A community resilience need or project I need help with;
  - A good sense of how service can address this need;
  - Organizational capacity to supervise someone for 11 months;
  - Funding to cover the match cost

Important Dates for 2019-20

- Now: Application is open!

- March 15, 2019   First Priority Deadline for project applications.

- May 3, 2019   Second Priority Deadline for project applications.

- June - July, 2019   Rolling application, Fellow matching, and Service Agreement period.

- August 23, 2019   Service Agreements and Capacity Assessments due.

- August 25, 2019   Service year begins with Fellow orientation.

- September 3, 2019   Local project work begins!
                                     Fellows begin work on Gap Assessments.

- Mid-August 2020   Projects wrap up; 2019-20 cohort graduates!

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Questions?

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