

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

OCTOBER 20, 2026

**Adopting Los Angeles County’s First-Ever Tribal Consultation Policy to
Strengthen Government-to-Government Relationships with Local Tribal
Governments**

In recent years, the County of Los Angeles (County) has taken meaningful steps to acknowledge and address false historical narratives about the land upon which the County sits and strengthen its relationships with Local Tribal Governments. These efforts include adoption of the Countywide Land Acknowledgment; development and publication of the County’s report examining past, present and ongoing harms against Local Tribes; and continued engagement and consultation with Tribal leaders. Together, these actions reflect the County’s commitment to truth, healing and reconciliation; elevating the stories, cultures and experiences of the original inhabitants of Los Angeles County; and building and sustaining relationships with Native peoples and Local Tribal Governments.

The Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy (Policy) represents a significant milestone in this ongoing work. As the largest public body in the United States to adopt a countywide Tribal Consultation Policy, Los Angeles County has an opportunity to establish a model for respectful, consistent and meaningful government-to-government

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consultation with Tribal Nations. The Policy provides both aspirational and actionable guidance for how County departments should consult with Local Tribal Governments and incorporate Tribal perspectives, knowledge and priorities into County decision-making.

The Policy applies to consultation with federally and non-federally recognized California Native American Tribes identified through the California Native American Heritage Commission's consultation contact list. By doing so, the County affirms its commitment to engaging all Local Tribal Governments with ties to the County in a manner that respects Tribal self-governance.

Existing federal and state laws require Tribal consultation in a variety of circumstances, including land use planning, environmental review, cultural resource protection and repatriation activities. While compliance with these legal requirements remains essential, the County recognizes that meaningful consultation extends beyond statutory obligations. The Policy is organized around five guiding principles that reflect the County's commitment to building and sustaining respectful government-to-government relationships: respect for Tribal self-governance; relationship building and trust; early, meaningful and ongoing consultation; recognition of Tribal knowledge and expertise; and accountability and continuous improvement. Together, these principles provide a foundation for strengthening consultation practices across County government

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and advancing responsive decision-making.

In developing the Policy, the County engaged in an extensive stakeholder-driven process that included consultation with Local Tribal Governments and collaboration with County employees. Tribal leaders and appointed Tribal representatives provided invaluable guidance on consultation practices, priorities and experiences working with government agencies. Their input helped shape a Policy designed to foster consistency while respecting the unique needs of individual Local Tribal Governments.

Adoption of the Policy represents an important beginning rather than an endpoint. Meaningful implementation will require continued partnership with Local Tribal Governments, development of departmental procedures, ongoing evaluation of consultation practices and regular reporting on progress. Through implementation of the Policy, the County can continue advancing its commitment to repairing harms, strengthening relationships with Tribal Nations, and ensuring Tribal voices are meaningfully included in decisions that affect Tribal communities and Ancestral lands.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the County of Los Angeles Tribal Consultation Policy as the County's framework and guiding document for government-to-government consultation with Local Tribal Governments;
2. Direct all County departments to incorporate the principles of the Tribal

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Consultation Policy into their policies, procedures, programs and decision-making processes, as appropriate, effective immediately;

3. Direct the Executive Director of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) to develop and return to the Board by March 2027 with a Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy Implementation Guide to support successful implementation of the Policy; and
4. Direct department heads to identify an individual at the management level to oversee implementation of the Tribal Consultation Policy within their department; coordinate consultation-related activities; serve as the department's primary liaison to Local Tribal Governments and County implementation staff; and work collaboratively to identify and advance departmental priorities, resource needs and implementation actions related to the Policy.

I, FURTHER, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the LANAIC Executive Director to oversee implementation of the Tribal Consultation Policy and, following adoption of the Implementation Guide, provide an annual report to the Board summarizing implementation progress, accomplishments and challenges; recommendations for improvement and resource needs; and opportunities to further strengthen County-Tribal Government relationships;

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2. Direct department heads to report annually to the LANAIC Executive Director on their consultation-related activities; and
3. Direct the Internal Services Department (ISD), in collaboration with the LANAIC Executive Director, to develop and maintain a centralized County intranet portal to support implementation of the Tribal Consultation Policy. The portal shall serve as a resource hub for County employees and include, as appropriate, templates, frequently asked questions, training materials, legal and policy resources, examples of effective consultation practices, lessons learned and other tools to promote consistency, institutional knowledge and continuous improvement in government-to-government consultation across County departments.

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Los Angeles County **BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY MANUAL**

Policy #:	Title:	Effective Date:
0.000	Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy	00/00/00

PURPOSE

The County of Los Angeles (County) Tribal Consultation Policy (Policy) provides direction and guidance for the County and its departments to consistently engage in meaningful government-to-government consultation with their formal governing bodies, referred to as Local Tribal Governments.¹ It reflects the County's commitment and recognition of tribal cultures, governance systems, histories, and traditional knowledge as essential considerations to inform County actions and policies.

Every County employee, regardless of role or department, shares responsibility for upholding this commitment and should look to this Policy to guide the development of procedures, practices, and relationships that strengthen County decision-making through government-to-government consultation with Local Tribal Governments.

Existing federal and State of California (State) law establishes consultation, notification, protection, and repatriation requirements applicable to the County with Native American tribes (Tribes) in a number of circumstances, including, but not limited to: (1) the adoption or updates to General Plans or Specific Plans; (2) during the consideration of discretionary projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act; (3) the designation of open space; and (4) the return of objects of cultural significance. Beyond legal requirements, the County recognizes the mutual benefits of developing, strengthening, and maintaining relationships with Tribes through consultation on other matters of shared interest.

Because Tribal cultural and ancestral ties to the County extend beyond federal recognition status, the County will use the State's Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) contact list (Contact List) for identifying relevant Tribes. Maintained for Tribal consultation under State law, the Contact List includes both federally-recognized and non-federally recognized Tribes with ties to the County, collectively referred to here as Local Tribes,² and their Local Tribal Governments.

The County recognizes that each Local Tribal Government maintains its own distinct consultation processes, protocols, and traditions. The County commits to understanding and respecting each Local Tribal Government's approach and aims to listen and adapt rather than imposing uniform standards.

^{1 2} See Definition No. 3 below.

The intent of this Policy is to honor the self-governance of Local Tribes; address the systemic harms that have stemmed from genocide, land theft, and erasure; and build and nurture sustained relationships based on trust and mutual respect. This Policy is intended to both guide consistent compliance with legally-required Tribal consultation and create a framework for expanded Tribal consultation on additional topics of mutual interest.

This Policy establishes the County's expectations and principles for communication and engagement with all Local Tribal Governments. It is intended to foster cooperative and respectful government-to-government relationships and is informed by the same principles of good-faith consultation and engagement that guide relationships between the federal Government and federally-recognized Tribes. This Policy does not mandate consultation between the County and Local Tribal Governments where consultation is not otherwise required by law; rather, it establishes a framework of expectations, informed by Tribal consultation principles, to guide the County's relationships and interactions with Local Tribal Governments. County Departments are strongly encouraged to apply this framework whenever their work may affect Local Tribes or Tribal interests, and to incorporate its principles into planning, decision-making, and other ongoing practices.

This Policy is not intended to interfere with legally required consultation. If this Policy conflicts with federal or State law, federal or State law shall prevail. This Policy does not extend State or federal consultation requirements or deadlines to Local Tribal Government engagement undertaken pursuant to this Policy. This Policy does not expand, limit, or alter the existing status, rights, or authority of any Local Tribal Government. For purposes of clarity and consistency, "Tribal Consultation" as used in this Policy encompasses both consultations required by federal or State law and engagement undertaken pursuant to this Policy beyond those legal requirements.³

REFERENCE

County:

July 13, 2021, Board Motion

October 5, 2021, Board Motion

June 22, 2022, Report Back on Proclaim June 25, 2021, As The 45th Anniversary Of The Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission And Envision The Commission's Future And Acknowledge And Apologize For The Historic Mistreatment Of California Native Americans

November 1, 2022, Board Motion

February 16, 2023, "We Are Still Here," A Report on Past, Present, and Ongoing Harms Against Local Tribes"

November 4, 2025, Board Motion

State:

California Executive Order B-10-11

California Executive Order N-15-19

Health and Safety Code section 8012 et seq.

³ See Definition No. 4 below.

Senate Bill (SB) 18
Assembly Bill (AB) 52
California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation (CalNAGPRA) Act
Government Code sections 7927.000 and 7927.005

Federal:

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (NAGPRA) (25 USC 32) and associated regulations (43 CFR 10), as amended
Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended
National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and associated regulations

DEFINITION

1. **Federally Recognized Tribe:** An Indian or Alaska Native Tribe recognized by the United States as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States.
2. **Local Tribes** – This term refers to both federally-recognized Tribes and non-federally recognized Tribes with ties to the County on the State's NAHC Contact List.
3. **Local Tribal Governments** – This term refers to the formal governing bodies of Local Tribes.
4. **Tribal Consultation** – In the context of this Policy, this term refers to the formal government-to-government process of communication and engagement between the County and Local Tribal Governments regarding actions, policies, plans, or projects that may affect Tribal rights, interests, lands, resources, or communities. In this Policy, Tribal Consultation also refers to consultation on all matters of mutual interest between the County and Local Tribal Governments beyond those required under State and federal law.

POLICY

The Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy is framed by the following guiding principles (Guiding Principles):

- I. **Honor Each Local Tribal Government's Authority and Recognize a Government-to-Government Relationship**
 - a. The County recognizes the inherent rights of self-governance of Local Tribal Governments and shall conduct consultation through government-to-government processes that are distinct from general public participation or community engagement activities.
 - b. As respective governments, the County and Local Tribal Governments are each empowered to select representatives to meet and consult on their behalf.
 - c. Consultation shall be conducted in a manner that respects Tribal governance structures, cultural values, processes, and decision-making protocols.
 - d. The County shall seek to build long-term relationships with all Local Tribal Governments.

- e. The County recognizes that each Local Tribal Government speaks only on behalf of its governing body or a plurality of its members and not on behalf of all Native peoples or communities.

II. Extend Beyond Legal and Regulatory Consultation Requirements

- a. To the extent feasible based on the bounds of the County's authority and capacity, County departments shall engage in government-to-government consultation with Local Tribal Governments beyond minimum legal and regulatory requirements to address matters of mutual interest, promote collaborative problem-solving, and support sustained intergovernmental relationships.
- b. To identify additional matters of mutual interest and establish frameworks and procedures for consultation, County departments may enter into memoranda of understanding (MOU) or other agreements (Agreements) with Local Tribal Governments.
 - i. Such Agreement frameworks can be used to cover a wide range of topics, including, but not limited to, public safety, health and welfare, socioeconomic matters, traditional ecological knowledge, access to cultural places on County lands, care of cultural materials, and other matters of mutual concern.
 - ii. These Agreements can serve as shared tools for both the County and Local Tribal Governments. They are not intended to serve as procedural hurdles, to delay action, or to place additional burdens on Local Tribal Governments. County departments are encouraged to approach MOUs and other Agreements as an opportunity to strengthen relationships and improve outcomes.
 - iii. County employees should be aware that MOUs and other Agreements are available options, not requirements. The decision to enter into such Agreements rests with the Local Tribal Government, and not all will choose to do so.

III. Engage in Early, Meaningful, Consequential, and Good Faith Consultation

- a. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that all Tribal consultations are early, meaningful, consequential, and conducted in good faith. The County commits to the following definitions of these concepts:
 - i. Early Tribal Consultation means County departments shall strive to engage Local Tribal Governments in consultation at the earliest feasible stage of scoping, policy development, planning, or project consideration that may impact tribal interests, with the intent to meaningfully consider and integrate Tribal input in decision-making processes from the beginning.
 - ii. Meaningful Tribal Consultation means a collaborative and iterative process in which Local Tribal Governments are provided timely information and a genuine opportunity to share input that can influence recommendations and decisions affecting their rights, lands, resources, or communities.
 - iii. Consequential Tribal Consultation means that Tribal input is seriously considered by the County and has the actual potential to materially influence a decision or action taken by the County. The County must also approach each consultation without presuming what information or

concerns Tribes will raise. The goal of consequential consultation is to seek agreement or consensus wherever possible. Where consensus cannot be reached, the County must be able to demonstrate that Tribal input was considered, not just that the consultation process was completed.

- iv. Good Faith Tribal Consultation means a respectful and honest dialogue conducted with transparency, mutual respect, and a sincere intent to listen, understand, and consider Tribal perspectives. This is not limited to the bounds of a single project or definition, but as part of an ongoing relationship with Local Tribal Governments. Good faith is demonstrated through consistent action over time. This means that when new information, developments, or impacts emerge that are relevant to matters previously consulted on, even years after a project has been concluded, the County has a responsibility to re-engage the Tribes that were part of that consultation.
- b. The County shall clearly communicate at the outset of each consultation process the scope of the proposed project or policy and the bounds of the County's authority and capacity.
- c. If Tribal requests cannot be met, the County will provide an explanation to ensure Local Tribal Governments can engage with full understanding of the decision-making context and the impact of their input.

IV. Respect Tribal Knowledge, Promote Cultural Awareness, and Protect Confidential Information

- a. The County will promote culturally informed consultation practices that recognize Local Tribes as experts in their cultures, histories, and places, and acknowledge that Tribal cultural resources and traditional places are essential elements of Tribal heritage, religion, and identity.
- b. The County shall discuss confidentiality concerns and expectations at the outset of consultation and as the consultation progresses or circumstances change, as needed. The consultation process shall incorporate measures designed to protect sensitive information pertaining to sacred sites and culturally sensitive information shared during consultation. Information identified by Local Tribal Governments as sensitive shall be treated as confidential to the fullest extent permitted by law. Local Tribal Governments shall be provided notice and any available opportunity to intervene in the event disclosure is compelled by a court order.

V. Ensure Consistency, Transparency, and Accountability

- a. The County shall promote consistent consultation practices across its departments by offering regular educational opportunities to employees and establishing clear procedures, roles, and responsibilities.
- b. The County will provide timely, accessible, and responsive information to Local Tribal Governments to support informed participation and County accountability.
- c. The County will maintain records of consultation, including consultation outreach, responses, meeting notes, feedback raised, and how feedback was

considered and addressed. Departments should be prepared to share any non-confidential and non-privileged consultation records and processes transparently with Local Tribal Governments upon request.

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors (Board) that all County departments shall engage in government-to-government Tribal consultation in line with these Guiding Principles. Further, the Board encourages County commissions, joint power authorities, and private-sector partners of the County to incorporate the Guiding Principles of this Policy in their work with Local Tribal Governments.

This Policy is not intended, and should not be construed, to define the legal relationship between the County and Local Tribal Governments. This Policy is not a law or regulation, and it does not create, expand, limit, or waive any legal rights or legal obligations, nor is it intended to alter any existing collectively bargained employment rights or MOUs between unions and the County.

Nothing in this Policy shall prevent or limit the County or Local Tribal Governments from engaging in informal relationship-building, communication, collaboration, or other activities outside of the Tribal Consultation communication process established by this Policy. The County is encouraged to maintain ongoing relationships with Local Tribal Governments through such activities. All such informal engagements should reflect the principles of respectful, good-faith, and transparent communication.

Nothing in this Policy is intended to delay or impede emergency operations undertaken to protect life, property, or public safety. In circumstances requiring an emergency response, County departments shall proceed as necessary while honoring the Guiding Principles of this Policy to the greatest extent feasible given the nature and urgency of the emergency.

This Policy and its Guiding Principles should be considered a starting point. It represents the County's commitment to progress while acknowledging that true relationships with Local Tribal Governments cannot be built overnight and that no single policy can resolve the full complexity of these relationships or address every challenge. Instead, this Policy will be consistently reviewed, refined, and strengthened over time in direct response to the ongoing dialogue between the County and Local Tribal Governments.

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

All County departments and Chief Executive Office; Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission staff will provide leadership in implementation to other County departments.

DATE ISSUED/SUNSET DATE

Issue Date: xxxxx, 2026

Sunset Date: xxxxx, 2026

County of Los Angeles Development of a Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan

DRAFT Tribal and Stakeholder Engagement Status Report #1

June 2026

Prepared for

County of Los Angeles

Prepared by

Kearns & West in coordination with Through Narrative

Section 1: Project Overview

Background

The Kearns & West Team, in conjunction with the LANAIC Executive Director, is developing a Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan for possible adoption by the LA County Board of Supervisors.

Tribal governments have a unique relationship with the County compared to community stakeholders who may engage in County processes. The method of interactions with Tribal governments are clearly distinguished from standard community engagement protocols or engagement with the urban American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) population to reflect the government-to-government relationship. Government-to-government Tribal consultation provides beneficial insight and helps to produce more robust and meaningful policies, procedures, and ordinances that govern all areas of mutual interest between the County and Tribes.

The Policy will provide a framework for the County to establish and maintain effective and consistent government-to-government relationships and engage in meaningful consultation with California Native American Tribes with ancestral and cultural ties to the County, including both federally recognized and non-federally recognized Tribal governments.

Goals for Outreach and Engagement

Success in this effort will be measured not only by the completion of deliverables, but by the quality of relationships developed and the long-term sustainability of the consultation framework created.

Most importantly, success means laying solid groundwork for Policy implementation. This work will be considered successful when relationships are developed between the County and Tribal Governments and when the interdepartmental connections needed to implement the policy are meaningfully strengthened.

The Kearns & West team's outreach and engagement approach has been intentionally designed to model the kind of respectful, government-to-government consultation that the Tribal Consultation Policy itself will recommend and to gather lessons from the process that may be incorporated into the accompanying Implementation Plan.

From outreach to document drafting, Tribal time and capacity was respected. Tribes had full choice over when and how deeply they participate, with a range of engagement options available to match their interests and bandwidth. Proven best practices have guided the process to date, and the Kearns & West team remains mindful of Tribal politics, maintaining parallel processes where needed. This approach has resulted in Tribes feeling seen, heard, and respected.

As this work moves forward in the development of the Tribal Consultation Policy and accompanying Implementation Plan, the team has a continued commitment to listening and adapting as Tribal and County needs emerge. County Counsel and key County departments have been engaged early, ensuring that Tribal feedback is met with transparency and realistic, grounded dialogue.

Effective consultation policies grow from trust, adapt through experience, and remain open to change when circumstances demand it. By prioritizing relationship-building alongside deliverable completion, the Kearns & West team aims to create conditions for ongoing partnership that extends beyond the life of this project and ensures that the policy development process itself exemplifies the principles of meaningful, respectful consultation that the final Policy will institutionalize across County operations.

Timeline

This project is anticipated to span 18 months from October 2025 through March 2027, structured in distinct phases that build upon each other while maintaining flexibility for stakeholder needs and feedback integration.

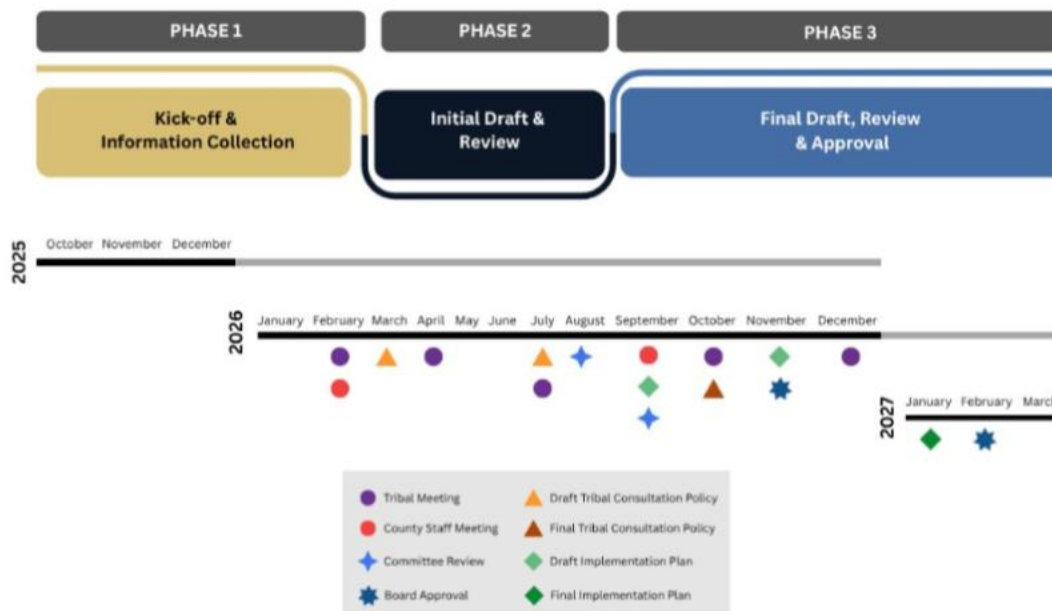


Figure 1: Project Phases and Deliverables

Phase I primarily focused on Information Collection. **Phase II** took that information and turned it into a draft Policy for review.

The following Tribal and Stakeholder Engagement Status Report covers outreach and engagement activities conducted in Phases I and II for the draft Policy. A second Engagement Status Report will be delivered following the development of the draft Implementation Plan.

The Report is broken out by participating stakeholder group. Participants in the development of the Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan include designated representatives from Tribes with ancestral ties to what is now known as Los Angeles County, County staff members, and LANAIC Commissioners.

Meeting summaries and outreach activity logs are included in the Appendix for reference.

Section 2: Tribal Participants

Outreach

All Tribal Governments listed on the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) AB 52 list for Los Angeles County were invited to participate in the development of the Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan. For this process, the County used the list made available by NAHC in December 2025, which included 26 Tribes.

LANAIC led initial outreach, contacting the leadership of all Tribes on the NAHC list via email to invite their participation and gather input on how they would prefer to engage. Follow-up

correspondence was conducted via email by the Kearns & West team, with phone outreach also used to ensure Tribes had multiple opportunities to respond and indicate how and whether they wished to participate.

During this initial outreach process, Tribal Leaders were asked whether they would like to identify a representative to participate in a series of up to five facilitated meetings to support the development of the Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan. For Tribes unable to commit to the full meeting series for any reason, the Kearns & West team offered alternative pathways for engagement, including written asynchronous feedback at various phases of the process or one-on-one information-gathering meetings.

Following meetings, the Kearns & West team conducted another round of outreach to all Tribes on the NAHC list, providing an update on the process so far and offering another opportunity to get involved.

Tribal Meeting #1

An in-person meeting with participating Tribes was held February 4 at The Music Center to formally introduce the Tribal Consultation Policy development process and begin collaborative discussions to inform the policy. Recognizing that not all Tribes would be able to attend in person, a second virtual meeting covering the same material was held on February 5.

Appointed Tribal representatives from nine Tribes participated across both sessions.

Participating Tribes included:

- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
- Pechanga Band of Indians
- Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation
- Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation

The objectives of these sessions were to provide an overview of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan development process; establish a framework for meaningful Tribal and County staff participation throughout the development process; discuss how we will maintain an ongoing feedback loop with Tribes and County staff; and gather information grounded in observations and lived experiences to inform the Policy and Plan.

Engagement with Tribal representatives yielded important early direction for the Policy's scope and structure. Tribes articulated the need for an expansive framework and definition of Tribal consultation, one that encompasses both legally mandated consultation and consultation on any topic of shared interest between the County and Tribes. Participating Tribes emphasized the importance of clearly articulating government-to-government roles, as well as ensuring transparency and accountability in implementation. A central theme was the need for a clear, accessible mechanism by

which Tribes can understand how the Policy has been implemented and how their input has meaningfully informed County decisions.

Following the meeting, a summary of the session, along with additional information requested during the meeting, was distributed to all participating Tribes.

Tribes that did not participate in the meeting were sent a follow-up email notifying them that the meeting had taken place and affirming that Tribal governments are welcome to participate at any point in the process, in whatever way best meets their interests and capacity. One Tribe, the Cahuilla Band of Indians, responded to the follow-up outreach and requested a copy of the meeting summary for review.

A copy of the Tribal Meeting #1 Summary can be found in Appendix A.

Tribal Meeting #2

A virtual meeting with participating Tribes was held April 30. The goal of this meeting was the review the draft Tribal Consultation Policy and to gather Tribal feedback on topics such as Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), emphasis on relationships and outcomes, and accountability measures to accompany the Policy when brought before the Board of Supervisors.

Appointed Tribal representatives from seven Tribes participated in Tribal Meeting #2.

Participating Tribes included:

- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
- Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
- Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
- Pechanga Band of Indians
- Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
- San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
- Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation

Following the meeting, a summary of the session was distributed to all participating Tribes. Tribes were also asked to provide any additional feedback on the draft Policy via email by May 29. No additional written feedback was received following the meeting.

Tribes that did not participate in the meeting were sent a follow-up email notifying them that the meeting had taken place and offering them the opportunity to provide written feedback on the draft Policy.

A copy of the Tribal Meeting #2 Summary can be found in Appendix B.

Section 3. County Staff

Outreach

Outreach to County staff was coordinated through Chief Deputies and led by LANAIC staff. The initial outreach communications emphasized the significance of the effort, outlining the process for developing the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy for potential adoption by the Board of

Supervisors. Staff input was requested from employees who directly or indirectly engage with Tribal governments across departments and a variety of roles to help ensure the Policy reflects the full breadth of County operations.

The outreach acknowledged that this effort follows requests made by Tribal leaders during previous County listening sessions focused on land acknowledgement, harms, and land access, and underscored the distinct nature of the government-to-government relationship between Tribal governments and the County. Deputies were asked to share a survey with appropriate individuals in their departments and to encourage participation. Three follow-up emails were sent to Deputies to support awareness and response rates.

In addition to outreach through Deputies, LANAIC staff also contacted staff members who had previously reached out to LANAIC regarding Tribal engagement. These individuals were invited to complete the survey and encouraged to share it with colleagues. Staff who provided their contact information through the survey indicating interest in further participation were also sent an invitation to the County Staff Meeting.

In preparing for the meeting, the team cross-referenced a list of departments identified by Tribes in previous County processes as ones they particularly interface with, tracking attendance to ensure representation from as many of those departments as possible.

Throughout Phases I and II, an open form was maintained on the County intranet, providing staff members an ongoing opportunity to submit feedback, ideas, or existing materials related to Tribal engagement at any point in the process.

County Survey

Engagement with County staff began with a written online survey designed to collect information about current practices for consulting and engaging with Tribes, the questions staff would look to the Policy to answer, and how Tribal consultation intersects with their day-to-day work.

The survey received 137 responses from staff members across 29 County departments, generating thoughtful and valuable feedback on current engagement practices, challenges, and opportunities. Key findings included:

- 50% of respondents indicated their work involves or may impact Tribes, while 27% were unsure whether their work has any impact on Tribes.
- 45% reported never personally engaging with Tribes in their role.
- Staff most commonly identified gaps in their understanding of when Tribal consultation is required, how to appropriately initiate contact with Tribes, and relevant cultural protocols, history, and considerations.
- Access to departmental support and guidance varies significantly. Only a few departments reported having written protocols or designated Tribal liaisons, and many staff members reported either not knowing what resources exist or believe their department has none.

Responses reflected both the significant number of departments already working with Tribes and strong interest among County staff for strengthening relationships with Tribes and establishing a consistent, respectful, and effective framework for Tribal consultation.

These insights are essential to shaping a policy that is both practical and effective and were additionally used to help guide the agendas for the Tribal and County staff meetings.

An overview of County staff survey results can be found in Appendix C.

County Meeting #1

In February, the Kearns & West team hosted two virtual meetings with County staff, with 25 staff members from 16 departments attending across both sessions.

The objectives of these sessions mirrored those of the Tribal meetings: to provide an overview of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan development process; establish a framework for meaningful County staff and Tribal participation throughout the process; discuss how an ongoing feedback loop with staff and Tribes would be maintained; and gather information grounded in staff observations and experiences to inform the Policy and Plan.

County staff emphasized the importance of a clear and actionable Implementation Plan, so each department understands its specific responsibilities and how the Policy applies to its operations. This theme reflects the survey findings and reinforced the need for practical, department-level guidance as a central component of the final Policy.

Following the meetings, a summary of the sessions was distributed to all attendees, along with a link to the open intranet form for ongoing feedback and input.

The County Staff Meeting #1 Summary can be found in Appendix D.

Additional County Staff Engagement

Beyond survey participation and the facilitated group meetings, the Kearns & West team conducted a few targeted one-on-one engagements with County staff to inform key aspects of the policy development process.

The team met with Chief Sustainability Officer Rita Kampalath to learn from the development of the OurCounty sustainability plan. This conversation yielded a number of lessons that continue to inform the Tribal Consultation Policy process, particularly regarding accountability measures and strategies for working with County departments on implementation plan development and execution.

The team also met with County Counsel to review the first draft of the Policy prior to bringing it back to Tribal representatives. This step was intentional to ensure that the draft would be workable for the County and that any necessary parameters were clearly understood before further Tribal engagement took place.

County staff who participated in the first meeting and Chief Deputies also received a draft version of the Policy for asynchronous review. They were invited to provide written feedback via email by May 29.

The Project Team received written feedback from 12 different departments. Some feedback focused on the text of the Policy while some included recommendations for the type of guidance needed to support implementation. This feedback, along with the Tribal feedback received, will be incorporated into the draft of the Policy that will be put forward to the Arts and Audit Committees before moving to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

The Draft Policy Feedback Tracker can be found in Appendix E.

Section 4. LANAIC

A core objective throughout Phases I and II has been keeping LANAIC Commissioners informed, ensuring they have the information needed to ultimately make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors for adoption of the Policy.

On March 17, the Kearns & West team presented a progress update to the Commission. It gave an overview of the Policy development process and timeline, as well as feedback heard to date from County staff and Local Tribes. The presentation was well received, with several Commissioners highlighting the thoughtfulness and intentionality of the Policy development process.

A copy of the slide deck from the March 17 presentation to LANAIC is included in Appendix F.

Appendix

Appendix A: Tribal Meeting #1 Summary Report

Appendix B: Tribal Meeting #2 Summary Report

Appendix C: County Staff Survey Overview

Appendix D: County Staff Meeting #1 Summary Report

Appendix E: Draft Policy Feedback Tracker

Appendix F: LANAIC Presentation Slide Deck

Appendix A: Tribal Meeting #1 Summary Report



Tribal Meeting #1

Project Overview and Context Setting

Meeting Summary

In-Person – February 4, 2026, from 12 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Virtual – February 5, 2026, from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Tribal Participants** – Submit honorarium invoice to Julien Tan (LANAIC Administrative Manager) at Jtan@lanaic.lacounty.gov
- **Tribal Participants** – Send any additional comments, resources, or information to the Kearns & West Project Team.
- **Project Team** – Share additional data from County survey, including the full list of County departments and responses broken out by department, with Tribal participants.
- **Project Team** – Share [County sustainability plan](#) as an example of an Implementation Plan to accompany a policy.
- **Project Team/County Staff** – Follow up with attendees on any unanswered questions from the meetings.
- **County Staff** – Look into ways to expand education around [the Land Acknowledgment, Harms Report, and accompanying resources](#).
- **County Staff** – Explore existing County mechanisms for accountability that could support implementation of the Tribal Consultation Policy.

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide an overview of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan development process.
2. Establish a framework for meaningful Tribal participation throughout the development process.
3. Review the work completed so far and revisit input previously shared by Tribes.
4. Discuss how we will keep an ongoing feedback loop with Tribes throughout the development of the Policy and Plan.

NOTES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Project Overview

- The Kearns & West Team, in conjunction with the LANAIC Executive Director, has been charged with developing a comprehensive Project Plan to draft the Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan for possible adoption by the LA County Board of Supervisors.
- The project team highlighted that this project is focused on Tribal Consultation. Tribal governments have a unique relationship with the County compared to community stakeholders who may engage in County processes. The method of interactions with Tribal governments should be clearly distinguished from standard community engagement protocols or engagement with the urban American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) population to reflect the government-to-government relationship. Government-to-government tribal consultation provides beneficial insight and helps to produce more robust and meaningful policies, procedures, and ordinances that govern all areas of mutual interest between the County and Tribes. However, the Implementation Plan piece of the project could offer some guidance on engagement as the County is very aware that poor engagement practices can undermine formal consultation work.
- [The County Policy Writing Guidelines](#) were shared with attendees, outlining the parameters of the Tribal Consultation Policy. While the Policy is constrained by these guidelines and County requirements on language and word choice, the Implementation Plan will allow the space for best practices and specific guidance based on information we gather from Tribal participants in this process. Two Countywide policies – [Cultural Policy](#) and [Sustainability Policy](#) – were also shared as examples with the Definition section, Sunset Date and Policy Review Timeline, and direction to an Implementation Plan highlighted.
- An attendee asked about the scope of the Tribal Consultation Policy, wondering whether it was limited to the legal definition of Tribal Consultation or if this was an opportunity to go further than minimum legal guidelines. The project team shared that they are advocating for an expansive scope. This project is Board directed and funded. There is an appetite at the County to further this work and the relationship between County government and Tribal governments.
- This project will span 18 months from October 2025 through March 2027, structured in distinct phases that build upon each other while maintaining flexibility for stakeholder needs and feedback integration. Phase I will primarily focus on Information Collection. Phase II will take that information and turn it into a draft Policy for review. Phase III will be the Public Review period, and Phase IV will focus on the final draft of the Policy and accompanying Implementation Plan. There are anticipated to be 5 Tribal meetings spread throughout the different phases.
- For the Policy, there are specific steps it must go through to go before the Board for adoption. The project team's commitment to Tribal participants is that they will be kept informed at every step.

Prior Tribal Input

- Since 2021, the County has conducted several projects and processes engaging Tribal leaders and has continuously heard the need for a Tribal Consultation Policy. Tribes have already dedicated significant time and energy to sharing this information with the County and this process aims to build on the information already received.
- An attendee shared that there is a need to clearly define a “Tribal government” and the relationship between a Tribal government and the County government. They noted that sometimes the word “partner” is used but is not accurate. The County needs to understand they take actions that have an impact on Tribes and they should ensure those actions don’t impede or infringe on the Tribes and their sovereignty. County staff must understand that when Tribes participate in a consultation process they are coming from the perspective of advocating for their Tribe; they are not speaking on behalf of all Tribes or Native peoples nor are they always going to be able to come to consensus or compromise with the County.
- Several attendees noted the need to manage expectations while ensuring that consultation doesn’t just become a checkbox exercise. Communication and clear feedback loops are needed throughout any consultation process.

County Survey

- Kearns & West shared the results of a County staff survey intended to gather information on how staff currently engage with Tribes and to identify gaps in knowledge, resources, and coordination. 137 staff members from 29 different County department took the survey.
- Attendees asked for a detailed breakdown of survey data, including responses broken down by department and the full list of departments that the survey was circulated to.
- One attendee said that the concerns shared by staff in the survey were the same ones they heard out in the field. There was discussion about staff fears about getting it wrong leading to staff members feeling frozen. The project team noted that this Policy and Implementation Plan is intended to empower staff to feel confident when consulting with Tribes.
- Attendees noted that these survey results seem to show an overall need and opportunity for education. They asked about the Land Acknowledgment and accompanying toolkit and how it was disseminated, noting that if staff members knew the concerns already shared by Tribes they may execute their jobs differently.
- One attendee asked about the survey results on transparency and accountability. They said they would want to know how County staff defined those and what accountability could look like for the Policy and Plan. They suggested a hub where Tribes would have visibility into how well it was being implemented and where Staff could use it to ask questions and see their benchmarks. The Project Team shared that while it may be difficult to start something new for accountability, there are existing County mechanisms that could be leveraged.

Discussion Questions

- What would success look like in both the process and the preparation of the consultation policy and implementation?
 - One attendee shared that success would look like addressing the concerns identified in the County survey. They said that would be a big step in the right

direction and make everyone involved feel as though they accomplished something.

- A couple of attendees discussed the need for another step in this process to address some immediate issues, including education and/or the creation of Standard Operating Procedures for existing consultations with Tribes. They said success would look like moving the needle so that County staff have confidence when consulting with Tribes.
 - One attendee said that if the goal for Policy is to be expansive, then it needs to be clear that this isn't just focused on cultural resources. They noted that there have never been meaningful conversations about what it would look like to consult with a Tribe even if they aren't legally required to do CEQA, AB 52, or SB18 consultation. They said a successful policy would allow both government agencies to outline what a meaningful consultation would be and to share the commitments from both sides. They encouraged it to be a two-way conversation where everyone understands the levels of engagement.
 - A couple of attendees shared their deep desire to not be erased. Any Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy must allow Tribes to speak for themselves.
- What are your biggest concerns or challenges you hope we can address as part of this process?
 - One note from an attendee focused on the County staff concern about overlapping or unclear boundaries that was identified in the staff survey. They said they were concerned about how guidance for this might be articulated.
 - A similar concern was raised by another attendee. They asked, "For tribal consultation, how will authority be determined in the event that Tribal Cultural Resources are discovered. What criteria will be established to give authority to the tribe or entity to speak on behalf of their ancestors or their ancestral territory?" County staff said they would follow up after the meeting.
 - Additional concerns from several attendees stemmed from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) contact list, which is the list used by the County for consultation. NAHC is currently undergoing changes to the list, which may lead to the erasure of non-federally recognized Tribes. Attendees asked how those changes may impact the intention and scope of the Consultation Policy. County staff shared that while it may limit legal consultations, the County will continue to engage and share and consult with all local Tribes in the areas where the County has the authority and control. Staff encouraged Tribes to follow up after the meeting with any specific concerns, as well as ways the County could support and help advocate for local Tribes in the NAHC process.

Next Steps

- The next meeting with Tribal participants is anticipated for April and will be held virtually. This meeting will focus on reviewing the first draft of the Tribal Consultation Policy. Potential dates will be circulated in March.
- If Tribal participants have comments after the meetings, and/or want to solicit input from their constituents and other community members, participants are welcome to send additional input to Alexandra Valdes or to the Kearns & West team.

Tribes Represented

Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council

Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians

Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

Pechanga Band of Indians

Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

Gabrielino/Tongva Nation

Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation

County of Los Angeles: Alexandra Ferguson Valdes

Facilitation Team: Kearns & West

Appendix B: Tribal Meeting #2 Summary Report



Tribal Meeting #2

Tribal Consultation Policy Review

Meeting Summary

Virtual – April 30, 2026, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Tribal Participants** – Submit honorarium invoice to Julien Tan (LANAIC Administrative Manager) at Jtan@lanaic.lacounty.gov
- **Tribal Participants** – Send any additional comments and feedback on the Draft Policy to Alexandra Valdes and/or the Kearns & West Project Team by May 31.
- **Tribal Participants** – Provide any examples of Policies, MOUs, or other agreements that have worked well for your Tribes.

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide an overview of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan development process and review the work completed so far.
2. Preview the draft Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and its overall structure.
3. Gather feedback on the Draft Policy's Guiding Principles.
4. Discuss how we will keep an ongoing feedback loop with Tribes throughout the development of the Policy and Plan.

NOTES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Draft Tribal Consultation Policy Overview

- The Kearns & West Team shared a change in the timeline. The original timeline shared with Tribal representatives at Tribal meeting #1 included a public review period because the team understood that one was required for a Countywide Policy. To streamline the process and allow more time for Tribal representatives to respond to the Draft Policy, the project team removed the public comment period from the timeline. The public will still be able to provide comments during committee and Board meetings. Tribes can submit feedback and comments until May 29, in addition to any comments shared during the meeting.
- The Kearns & West Team also reviewed [the County Policy Writing Guidelines](#) with attendees, outlining the sections and parameters of the Tribal Consultation Policy. While

the Policy is constrained by these guidelines and County requirements on language and word choice, the Implementation Plan will allow the space for best practices and specific guidance based on information we gather from Tribal participants in this process. There were no questions about the structure before the meeting moved on to content.

Facilitated Review Session

- **Guiding Question: What did the Draft Policy get right? What elements would you want to see preserved or built upon?**
 - One participant shared that the Draft Policy reflected what their Tribe hoped to see and that they appreciated this positive step by the County.
 - One participant noted their appreciation of the early consultation piece. However, they wanted to note that this is where it will be really important to map out those next steps. For instance, their Tribe often shares knowledge with other kin Tribes, creating a rotation of monitors on the site. They would want the County to understand the knowledge-sharing process, its limits, and the expectations around it. After the discussion, it was noted that this could be spelled out in the Implementation Plan.
 - In the Purpose section, one participant noted the language around the Native American Heritage Commission contact list. The current draft states, “the County looks to the State’s Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List as its guide for identifying relevant Tribes.” They said they want to see stronger language, noting that this is the exclusive way to identify Tribes. They said “guide” leaves wiggle room.
- **Guiding Question: Was there anything that sparked concern, especially regarding the feasibility of implementation with your Tribe?**
 - One participant commented on the language around “good faith.” They wanted to add that this is ongoing. For instance, if something new arises three years after a project, the Tribes that were consulted should be notified.
 - One participant shared that it will be important for the Tribes, especially the non-federally recognized Tribes to be on equal footing. They said it will be important to call out in the Policy and make it clear that one Tribe cannot speak for another Tribe.
 - A couple of participants brought up a desire to have the Policy reference consulting with only the culturally affiliated Tribes to a location.
 - One participant shared that they think Section III, in its current form, reads like a checkbox exercise in which completing the consultation is the end result. They want to see it strengthened to reflect the consultation's purpose better and to emphasize the intended outcomes. They said the current language feels watered down. They recommended adding purpose/outcomes/goals language to the definitions in Section III and explaining how each term relates to the others. Another participant reiterated this need for purpose and outcomes. They said it needs to be clear that consultation is not a waste of a Tribe’s time.
 - One participant emphasized their desire for stronger language throughout. For instance, the use of “County Departments shall strive” rather than “are required.”
 - One participant noted that this Draft Policy is difficult to review and provide feedback on in a vacuum because they don’t know what will be included in the Implementation Plan.

- **Guiding Question: A key goal for this Draft Policy is to communicate the County's emphasis on establishing and sustaining ongoing relationships with Tribes. Does that come through in the Draft Policy language as it exists?**
 - Participants agreed that this is currently implied in the policy's language and would like to see it explicitly called out if it is the Policy's intent.
 - One participant said the current draft doesn't clearly state the government-to-government relationship or the intent to grow and maintain it.
 - A couple of participants discussed the need for clear accountability measures. One participant suggested a ledger to document the consultations done. They said the Tribes need a clear way to know the Policy is being implemented. They said there should also be a process for when Tribes feel good faith has not occurred. Another participant referenced the Koi Nation case and the documentation requirements, noting their relevance to the implementation of this Policy.
- **Guiding Question: Could an MOU process help provide or support accountability?**
 - One participant said they appreciated the idea, but every Tribe has had a different experience with MOUs. They said MOUs can be misused and are often not to the benefit of the Tribe. They recommended highlighting other types of agreements, such as consultation agreements and letters of intent, in addition to MOUs, but they liked the idea of having a framework to provide structure.
 - Another participant shared that they are currently working with some County departments on MOUs and have also used other agreements, such as access agreements. They said it could be an important guiding tool, but they have seen MOUs fail. They said the County should make clear the length of these agreements, their limits, and define the specifics of any agreement like this.
 - One participant said they would like to see regular checkpoints for evaluating the MOUs if they are used.
 - Regarding accountability beyond the MOUs, one participant said they would like to see annual performance reviews of the County's Tribal consultations.

Additional Feedback

- The Project Team asked Tribal participants to provide feedback on the definitions, both in the definitions section and to identify other terms that need clear definitions. Having definitions that work for the Tribes or at least provide clarity on the definitions the County is working from would be a strong outcome of this Policy.
- Alexandra Valdes noted that this iteration of the Policy is a starting point. As part of the Policy, there will also be a sunset review timeline and process, as well as a process for gathering feedback on implementation and progress. She noted that this is intended to be a living, breathing document. Participants said they would like to see a note in the document text.
- One participant shared that they would like to move up the third paragraph in the Purpose section to the top so the opening can be broader. Alexandra said she liked the idea of calling in all employees at the start, ensuring everyone knows it is relevant to them and their work.

Next Steps

- The next meeting with Tribal participants is anticipated for late July/early August and will be held virtually. This meeting will provide an update on the feedback received and how it was incorporated, determine the review process for Policy post-adoption, and begin discussing the specifics of Implementation.
- If Tribal participants have comments after the meetings and/or want to solicit input from their constituents and other community members, they are always welcome to send additional input to Alexandra Valdes or the Kearns & West team.
- At the end of the meeting, Alexandra also shared [a funding opportunity](#) with the Tribal representatives. She said they could email her if they had questions.

Tribes Represented

Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council

Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians

Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation

Pechanga Band of Indians

Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians

San Fernando Band of Mission Indians

Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation

County of Los Angeles: Alexandra Ferguson Valdes

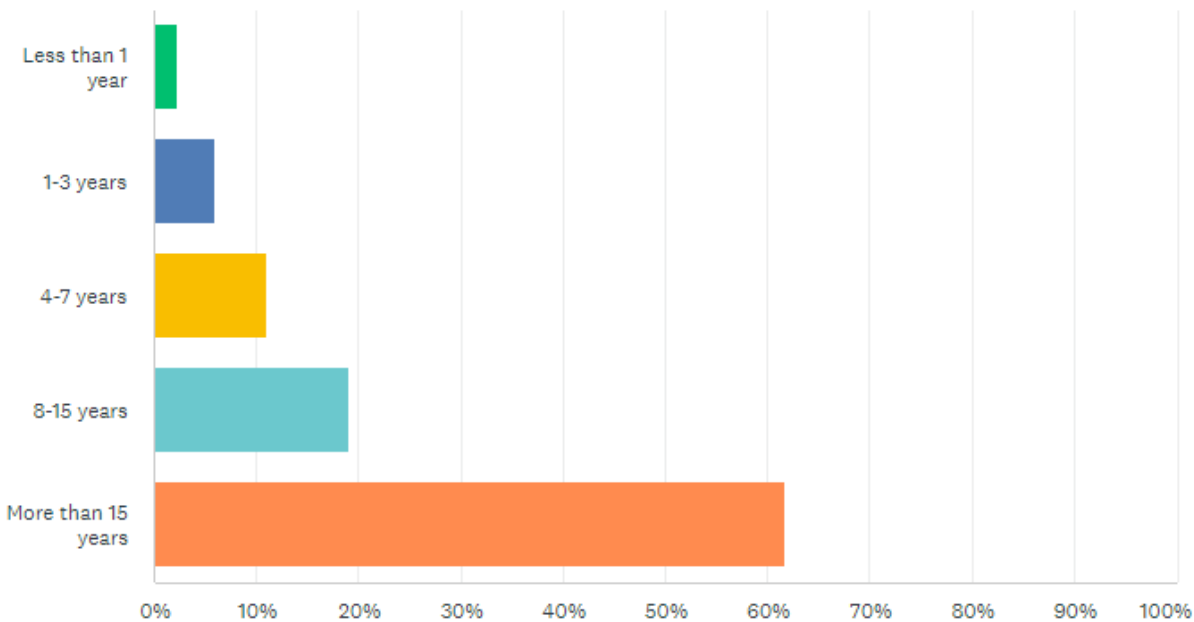
Facilitation Team: Kearns & West

Appendix C: County Staff Survey Overview

How long have you worked for Los Angeles County?



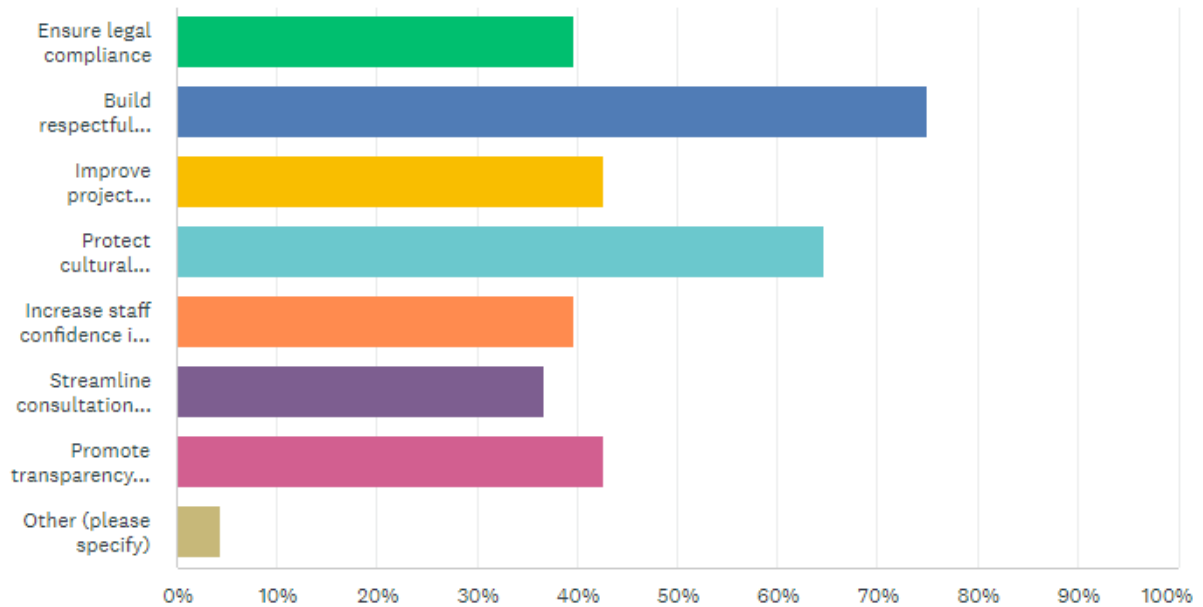
Answered: 136 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 1 year	2.21%	3
1-3 years	5.88%	8
4-7 years	11.03%	15
8-15 years	19.12%	26
More than 15 years	61.76%	84
TOTAL	136	

What should be the primary goals of a County Tribal Consultation Policy? (...

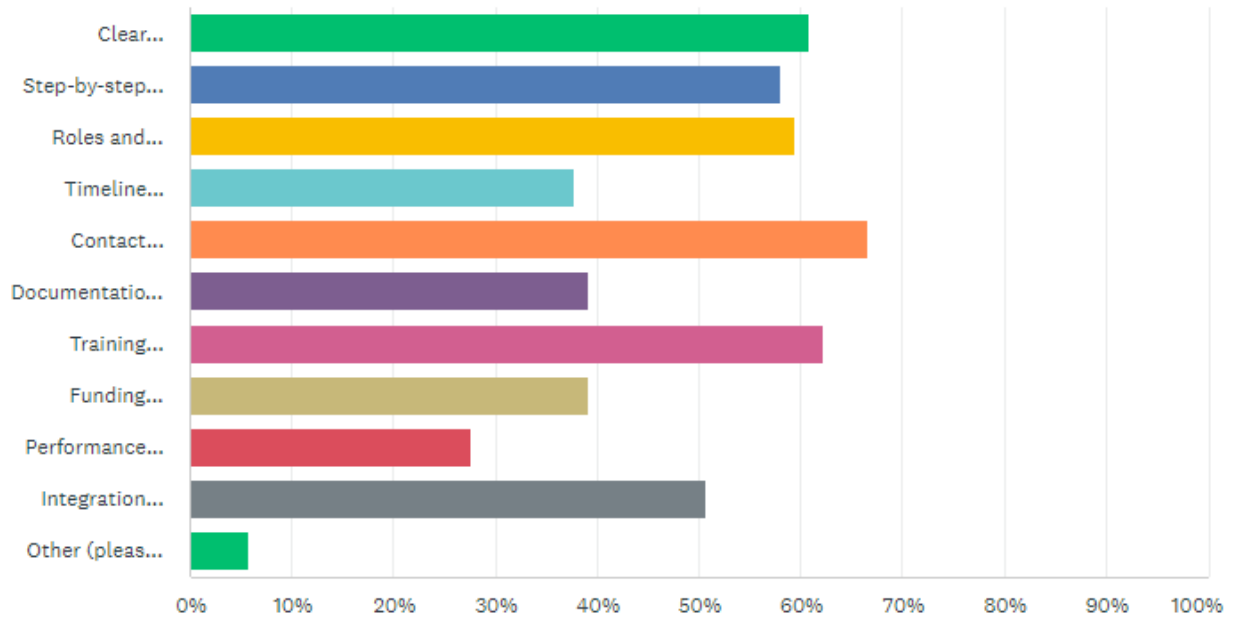
Answered: 68 Skipped: 69



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Ensure legal compliance	39.71%	27
▼ Build respectful government-to-government relationships	75.00%	51
▼ Improve project outcomes through early Tribal input	42.65%	29
▼ Protect cultural resources and Tribal interests	64.71%	44
▼ Increase staff confidence in engaging with Tribes	39.71%	27
▼ Streamline consultation processes	36.76%	25
▼ Promote transparency and accountability	42.65%	29
▼ Other (please specify)	4.41%	3
Total Respondents: 68		

What elements are most critical to include in the policy and/or accompany... ✚ ↺

Answered: 69 Skipped: 68

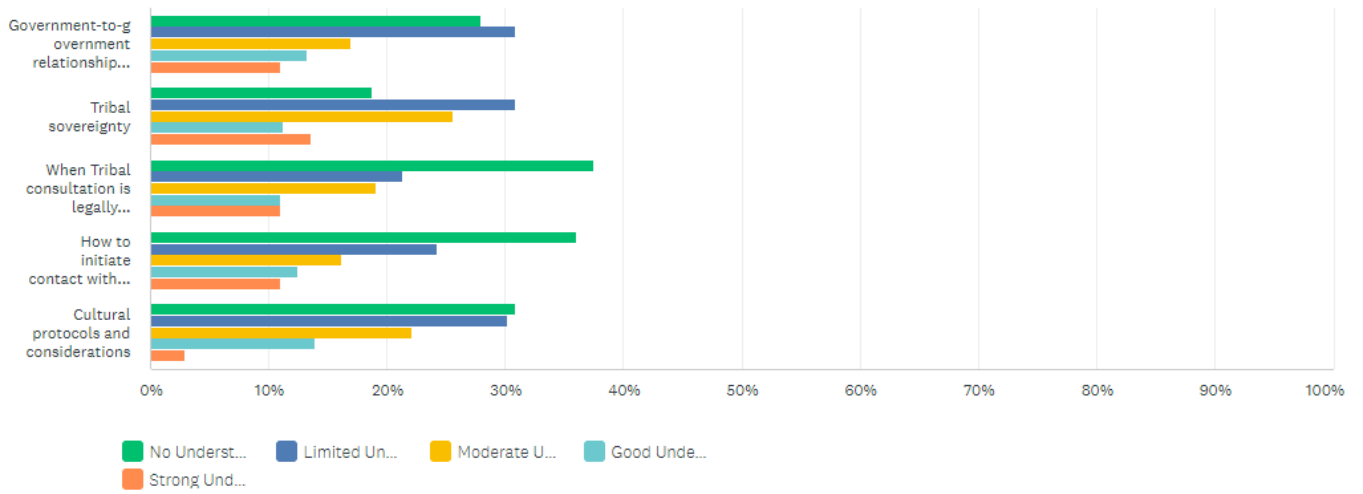


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Clear definition of when consultation is required	60.87%	42
▼ Step-by-step consultation procedures	57.97%	40
▼ Roles and responsibilities (staff, departments, Tribes)	59.42%	41
▼ Timeline expectations and requirements	37.68%	26
▼ Contact protocols and communication guidelines	66.67%	46
▼ Documentation requirements	39.13%	27
▼ Training requirements for staff	62.32%	43
▼ Funding mechanisms	39.13%	27
▼ Performance measures/accountability	27.54%	19
▼ Integration with existing County processes	50.72%	35
▼ Other (please specify)	5.80%	4
Total Respondents: 69		

How would you rate your current understanding of the following?



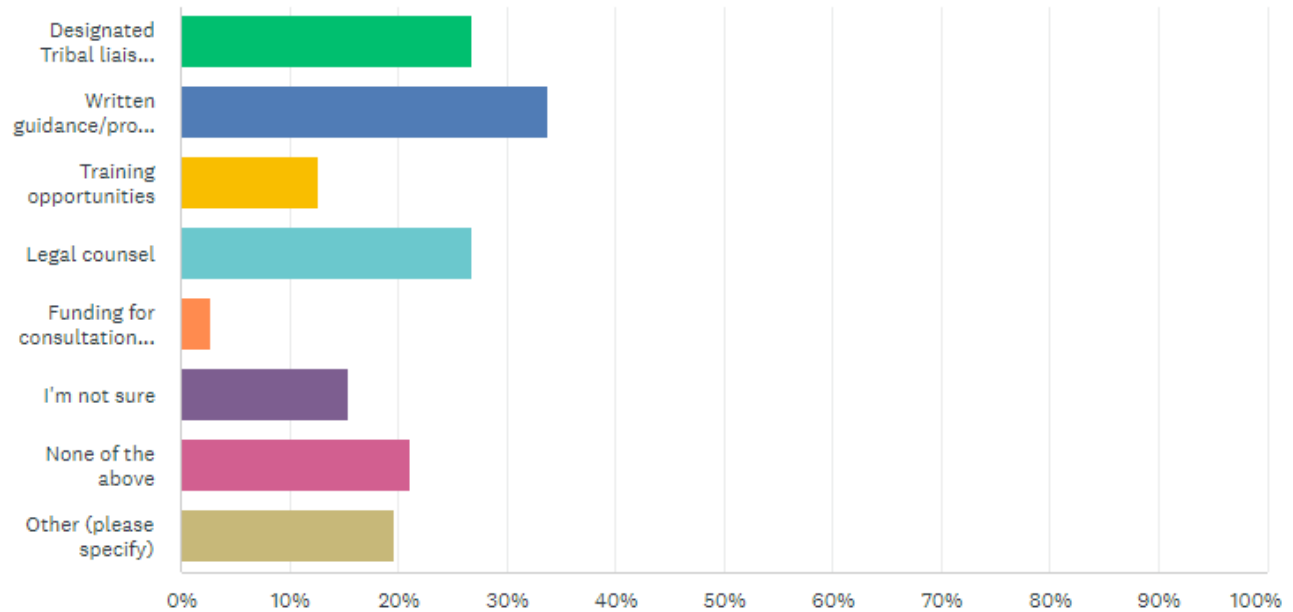
Answered: 136 Skipped: 1



	NO UNDERSTANDING	LIMITED UNDERSTANDING	MODERATE UNDERSTANDING	GOOD UNDERSTANDING	STRONG UNDERSTANDING	TOTAL
Government-to-government relationship between County and Tribes	27.94% 38	30.88% 42	16.91% 23	13.24% 18	11.03% 15	136
Tribal sovereignty	18.80% 25	30.83% 41	25.56% 34	11.28% 15	13.53% 18	133
When Tribal consultation is legally required in California	37.50% 51	21.32% 29	19.12% 26	11.03% 15	11.03% 15	136
How to initiate contact with Tribes	36.03% 49	24.26% 33	16.18% 22	12.50% 17	11.03% 15	136
Cultural protocols and considerations	30.88% 42	30.15% 41	22.06% 30	13.97% 19	2.94% 4	136

What resources or support do you currently have access to for Tribal engagement... ⚙ ↺

Answered: 71 Skipped: 66

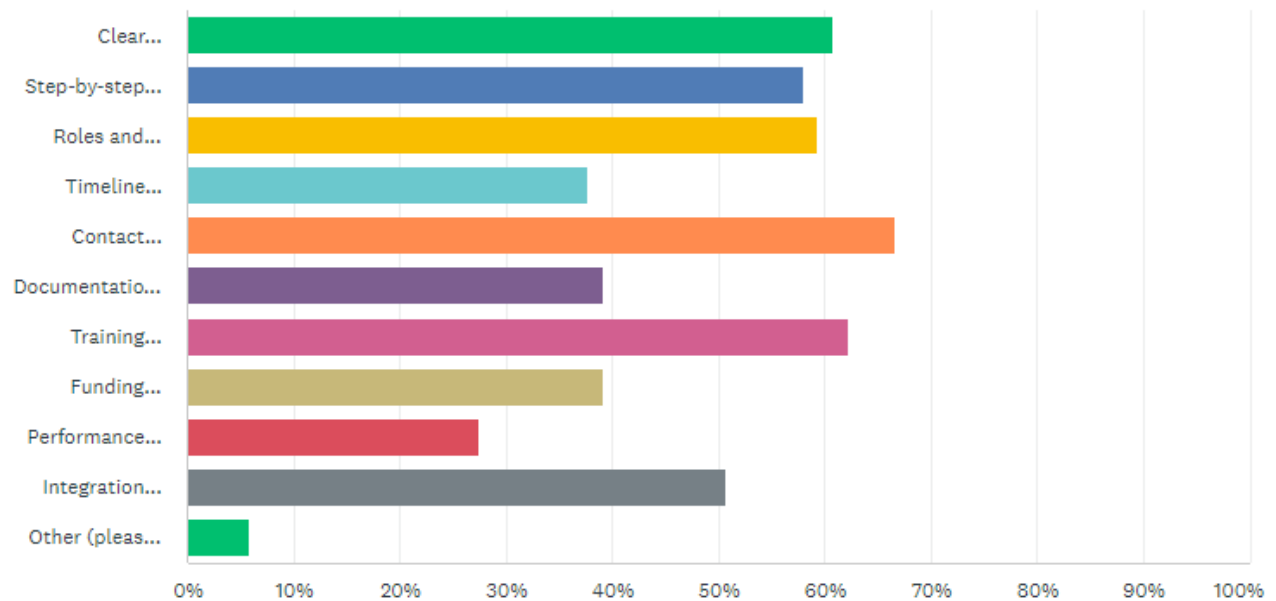


ANSWER CHOICES ▼	RESPONSES ▼	
▼ Designated Tribal liaison in my department	26.76%	19
▼ Written guidance/procedures	33.80%	24
▼ Training opportunities	12.68%	9
▼ Legal counsel	26.76%	19
▼ Funding for consultation activities	2.82%	2
▼ I'm not sure	15.49%	11
▼ None of the above	21.13%	15
▼ Other (please specify)	19.72%	14

Total Respondents: 71

What elements are most critical to include in the policy and/or accompanying i... ⚙ ↺

Answered: 69 Skipped: 68



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Clear definition of when consultation is required	60.87%	42
▼ Step-by-step consultation procedures	57.97%	40
▼ Roles and responsibilities (staff, departments, Tribes)	59.42%	41
▼ Timeline expectations and requirements	37.68%	26
▼ Contact protocols and communication guidelines	66.67%	46
▼ Documentation requirements	39.13%	27
▼ Training requirements for staff	62.32%	43
▼ Funding mechanisms	39.13%	27
▼ Performance measures/accountability	27.54%	19
▼ Integration with existing County processes	50.72%	35
▼ Other (please specify)	5.80%	4
Total Respondents: 69		

Appendix D: County Staff Meeting #1 Summary Report



LA County Staff Meeting #1

Project Overview and Context Setting

Meeting Summary

February 10, 2026, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Virtual)

February 11, 2026, from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. (Virtual)

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Staff Attendees** – Share any existing County mechanisms for accountability that could support implementation of the Tribal Consultation Policy, as well as any existing documentation, templates, or guidance used by your department to work with Tribes.
- **Staff Attendees** – Share information with department colleagues.
- **Project Team** – Send out link to open-ended form for collection of staff examples, documents, and future comments and questions.
- **Project Team** – Follow up with attendees on any unanswered questions from the meetings.
- **Project Team** – Craft and circulate the “why” statement so staff attendees can be ambassadors and help build buy-in for the Policy and implementation.

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide an overview of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan development process.
2. Establish a framework for meaningful Tribal and County staff participation throughout the development process.
3. Discuss how we will keep an ongoing feedback loop with Tribes and County Staff throughout the development of the Policy and Plan.
4. Learn from County Staff's observations and experiences of consulting with Tribes.

NOTES AND KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Project Overview

- The Kearns & West Team, in conjunction with the LANAIC Executive Director, has been charged with developing a comprehensive Project Plan to draft the Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan for possible adoption by the LA County Board of Supervisors. Kearns & West was selected following an open, competitive RFP process.
- The project team highlighted that this project is focused on Tribal Consultation. Tribal governments have a unique relationship with the County compared to community stakeholders who may engage in County processes. The method of interactions with Tribal governments should be clearly distinguished from standard community engagement protocols or engagement with the urban American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) population to reflect the government-to-government relationship.
- One attendee asked if this process is intended to provide further guidance for SB18 and AB52 consultations or something more. The project team responded that this project is taking an expansive view of what “consultation” means. It is an opportunity to go beyond legal definitions and cultural resources to encompass all areas of mutual interest between local Tribes and County departments. County Counsel added that County policy does not supersede State law or guidance. Statutory requirements remain unchanged. The policy aims to standardize practice while recognizing that not all scenarios fit a one-size-fits-all approach. The goal is for the Policy to provide clarity and consistency, not to tie staff’s hands.
- This project will span 18 months from October 2025 through March 2027, structured in distinct phases that build upon each other while maintaining flexibility for stakeholder needs and feedback integration. Phase I will primarily focus on Information Collection. Phase II will take that information and turn it into a draft Policy for review. Phase III will be the Public Review period, and Phase IV will focus on the final draft of the Policy and accompanying Implementation Plan.
- This was the first of two meetings with County staff in this process. However, communication with County staff will be ongoing throughout the process. A form will be circulated after the meeting for additional information collection and drafts of the Policy will be shared for review in the spring.

Prior Tribal Input

- Since 2021, the County has conducted several projects and processes engaging Tribal leaders and has continuously heard the need for a Tribal Consultation Policy. Tribes have already dedicated significant time and energy to sharing this information with the County and this process aims to build on the information already received.
- The Project Team held the first Tribal Meeting in this process and nine Tribes participated. The feedback from Tribes during this first meeting largely centered around three main themes: ensuring the Policy is an expansive framework, clarifying government-to-government roles and relationships, and emphasizing that transparency and accountability matter.

- Discussion Question: What mechanisms, including current County systems, are available to track implementation, address inquiries, and communicate benchmarks to Tribes?
 - A few attendees shared that report backs on Board motions can be a good way to ensure accountability and a way to publish updates in the public record.
 - One attendee pointed out that with policies, the Board can direct an annual report on implementation, which is similar to the report back mechanism but more formal. For multi-department implementation, the reports can also be specifically assigned to a particular department to manage.
 - One attendee pointed out that it is one thing to have a public report back, but another thing for members of the public to access and use it.
 - One attendee shared that tapping into the Management Appraisal and Performance Plan (MAPP) has been integral for accountability on equity work. They noted that it always helps to have examples of the type of MAPPs goals and measures of success that can be used, or how to center them as it relates to Tribal consultation. Many times folks don't know how to write them or frame them and/or approach them.
 - One attendee who conducts legally mandated Tribal Consultation said they are good at tracking project-by-project documentation, but there is no larger system that evaluates how they are doing. They noted that the people they work with often feel overwhelmed by the amount of information they include in their documentation, so it's not useful as a public report out.
 - One attendee noted that there were likely several examples from ARDI's work on accountability and sharing out progress. Another attendee added that whether it's ARDI or another County entity, they've learned that accountability and follow-up processes are important to make these policies actually enduring and acted upon, especially when aiming for implementation across all departments. Otherwise, it can often end up only being implemented by "the enthusiastic adopters."

County Survey

- Kearns & West shared the results of a County staff survey intended to gather information on how staff currently engage with Tribes and to identify gaps in knowledge, resources, and coordination. 137 staff members from 29 different County departments took the survey.
- One of the key takeaways from the survey was that staff lacked understanding of how to appropriately initiate contact with Tribes and this prompted questions about current processes for contacting Tribes. One attendee asked if they were supposed to look up the contacts for the Tribes in the Land Acknowledgment and use that as the contact list. The Project Team clarified that the Tribes listed in the Land Acknowledgment were Tribes that participated in its development or those who requested to be added. This is an open process and more Tribes may be added in the future. The full list of Tribes for consultation came from the California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and it includes many more Tribes. One attendee noted that the last time they requested the list from NAHC, there were about 25 Tribes for Los Angeles County. County Counsel added that the County Policy cannot and will not have any impact on the NAHC list or process.

- One of the key takeaways from the survey noted that staff have concerns about knowing who the authorized representative of a Tribe is. They said this Policy and Plan could add guidance and clarity for staff around how to treat comments and input from Tribal members who may not have been authorized to speak on behalf of the Tribe, but who can still offer key perspectives.
- An attendee asked about creating a standard process for contacting Tribes. The Project Team clarified that the Policy and Implementation Plan can create a standard process for County staff to use, but they cannot dictate how Tribes will communicate.

Discussion Questions

- From your perspective, what key elements define a successful policy rollout and implementation for both the County and your department?
 - One attendee said they would need clear consultation guidelines, including when to engage based on County objectives. They said they have a clear understanding of CEQA, but it would need to be spelled out for “small c” consultations that are not legally required. Another attendee agreed and said they would also like guidance as to what levels of staff should engage with Tribes.
 - One attendee said they wondered whether the framing of 'required' for legally mandated consultation could be flipped, as it sounds like a checkbox exercise rather than a meaningful consultation. They suggested using “opportunities.”
 - One attendee shared an example of the Vision Zero Action Plan. They said they appreciated the specificity of this plan, noting that it can sometimes be hard to see how it applies to your department when a policy and plan take a more blanket approach. Another attendee echoed these sentiments and said that each department might need tailored step-by-step procedures.
 - The group discussed the County’s promotion culture and how to make sure knowledge isn’t lost from role to role. One attendee suggested creating best management practices that can be shared with others.
 - Attendees wanted the Implementation Plan to include templates, clear training materials and guides, examples, FAQs, and scenarios, so staff members know how it applies to them and their department. One attendee suggested scripts for how to communicate with Tribes.
 - One attendee stressed the importance of securing the Department Head's buy-in, in addition to mid-level staff responsible for implementation. Ensuring understanding of the policy and the willingness and eagerness to implement it will be critical to success. They noted that they should be brought in during the development process because Department Heads often think 3-5 years ahead, and if they hear about it now, it can start to appear on their list of priorities.
 - One attendee noted that developing the narrative, the “why” is this work important, will be important for success. They said it can help encourage people to go above the minimum or just checking a box.
 - One attendee said that a successful rollout will need at least one person to be available to answer questions or provide guidance and coaching to departments as they begin implementation. Another attendee echoed this, saying the County would need to commit to funding and staffing for consultation. The group discussed the difficulty of the model of needing proven success before investment. The real value in Tribal consultation is the relationship-building with Tribes,

ensuring that the County is not just coming to Tribes for extraction but is developing a meaningful understanding of their needs and interests. But it sometimes takes seeing the benefits to be able to advocate for more funding or dedicated staff.

- One attendee shared that they did not believe a rollout to all departments would be feasible at one time. There may need to be a more targeted approach and then expand based on those lessons learned.
 - A few attendees discussed the importance of peer support for the staff members doing the day-to-day work. One suggested a working group made up of representatives from different departments to share knowledge. This group could also discuss timelines and work together to reduce the capacity burden on Tribes.
 - When circulating the draft Policy, it was recommended that the Project Team ask, “What would a department need to implement this Policy effectively?” rather than asking only for text edits.
- What are your biggest concerns or challenges you hope we can address as part of this process?
 - One attendee said there are so many legal Tribal Consultations underway, and they would rather see those all completed before expanding the scope of what Tribal consultation can mean for the County. Another attendee said they have seen differences in how departments handle them and would hope this Policy and Implementation Plan can address those differences.
 - One attendee shared that applicant projects and County projects are currently following different and sometimes conflicting AB 52 consultation policies. This has led to confusion on all sides.
 - One attendee shared that they feel as though the existing laws for Tribal Consultation provide very little actual guidance or direction on implementation and leave a lot of room for interpretation. They said they are concerned the Policy could be the same unless the Implementation Plan is very clear. Another attendee noted that there are gaps beyond the statute language, even for legal Consultation, that should be addressed through this process. This includes the nuts and bolts of how consultation is conducted, such as what to do about meeting notes, confidential materials, and ending a consultation.
 - One attendee noted that it will be important but challenging to standardize without homogenizing and flattening.
 - One attendee noted that staff support is critical. They said they would like to see a centralized place that can provide support to County staff with questions or who need more guidance.
 - Several attendees raised questions about the burden on Tribes if there are even more consultation requests under the Policy. One said there needs to be interdepartmental coordination to reduce asks or to coordinate on timing when possible.
 - One attendee shared an example from their work. They said they have created institutional committees that representatives from local Tribes serve on. It has worked well to centralize requests and information gathering through this Committee. They said one of their biggest takeaways has been to share everything they are working on and to not to assume what a Tribe’s needs, desires, or priorities are.

- Another attendee echoed this sentiment. They shared that they would like to ensure that it is a two-way street. There are opportunities to incorporate Tribal perspectives and Tribal policies into how the County operates. Examples included surplus land or consistency in historical context statements. They asked how each department can examine their policies and identify what they can bring to the table to offer the Tribes, to show the real relationship.
- One attendee shared their observations on the difficult Tribal landscape in LA County. They noted that there is intertribal conflict, and that often reaching out to Tribes for consultation has put staff in positions where they feel they have to adjudicate those conflicts. That is not the County's place. They said staff need guidance about where to step and where not to step. The County cannot be a conduit to disrespect a Tribe. That must be a guiding principle of any Policy and Implementation Plan.
- One attendee shared that most County staff members do not have any contemporary interactions with Native peoples. They said general background knowledge and education is needed before they can be ready for government-to-government interactions.
- One attendee shared that culture shift is difficult. They need to be prepared for this to be hard. It will take persistence.

Questions from Attendees

The following questions were not directly addressed during the meetings. The Project Team is working to gather more information and will follow up.

- Can the policy account for private development projects, since we are limited to go beyond the minimum requirements?
- Is the mere historical presence of a tribe in the general area of a project sufficient to establish that ground disturbing activities would have a potentially significant impact? If so, every project in LA County would require mitigation.
- What's the position of LA County on fee collection by various Tribes?
- How can County staff be more proactive? This development process is expected to take about 18 months, but the work is not stopping until then. What can they do now? How can County staff develop relationships with Tribes now?

Next Steps

- The next meeting with Staff participants is anticipated for September and will be held virtually. In advance of this meeting, Staff will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Tribal Consultation Policy over the next couple of months.
- If Tribal participants have comments after the meetings, and/or want to solicit additional input from their department colleagues, participants are welcome to send additional input to Alexandra Valdes or to the Kearns & West team.

County Departments Represented

Regional Planning

Public Works

Department of Children and Family Services

Sustainability

Arts & Culture

ARDI

Natural History Museum

Department of Health Services

Department of Mental Health

County Library

County Counsel

Beaches & Harbors

Agricultural Commissioner Weights & Measures

Homeless Services

Internal Services

Office of Supervisor Lindsey Horvath

Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors

LANAIC/Project Team: Alexandra Ferguson Valdes

Project Team: Kearns & West

Appendix 1: White Board Activity

Question 1

What mechanisms, including current County systems, are available to track implementation, address inquiries, and communicate benchmarks to Tribes?

Info Author When working on CEQA documents we have mitigation measures that address Tribal Resources and include tribal monitoring. There is a commitment that we do work with Tribes.	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User General Plan Annual Progress Report. Our dept reports every year on the implementation of the General Plan Implementation Program. If a tribal member implementation program is adopted, then we would report on the progress every year.
Info Author Annual report backs on identified priorities - anything submitted to the Board is available to the public and on the department website	Add text	Add text	Add text	Info Author Board motions
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	
Info Author MAPPs - Management Appraisal & Performance Plans have been integral for accountability on Equity work at LA Health Services -->	Info Author it always helps to have examples of this type of MAPPs, goals and measures of success that can be used or have to center them as it relates to tribal consultation. Many times folks don't know how to write them or frame them and/or approach them.	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Integrate as a section in standard of board letters. Something simple like stating whether any tribes were consulted with.
Info Author Specificity of plans is successful (ex. Vision Zero) where specific departments say they will be a lead in	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text
Info Author Public facing webpage / dashboard to show the progress of how you are moving strategies forward. Might be beneficial to community to show policy is being implemented.	Info Author With policies, the Board can direct an annual report on implementation - the report can detail how strategies are being implemented by Departments. The report can then be shared back with the public.	Add text	Info Author Specific departments will be identified as "leads" of specific strategies in a plan	Add text
Info Author Creating an that just comment whether it's ARD or another County entity like we've heard that accountability and follow up processes are important to make sure policies actually ending and not just on paper. especially across all departments and not just the environmental department	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Departmental tribal lessons and implementing community advisory groups.

Question 2

From your perspective, what key elements define a successful policy rollout and implementation for both the County and your department?

Add text 	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Provide a template for a tribal engagement plan for depts to use and build on
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Require depts to assign an internal staff member as tribal liaison
Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Inform and involve department heads early. And then have a MAPP goal related to this?	Unknown User Training and education for both Department heads and staff most involved in the consultations and relationship-building.
Add text	Add text Add feedback due to wide variety of departments and work	Add text Internal training and coordination; dedicated POC for tribal engagement	Unknown User Perhaps have regular discussion within our department to share information among those that work with Tribes. More information sharing.	Unknown User Identify the benefits that this policy would have on our projects. Understand that building a relationship with Tribes facilitates project implementation.
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text

Question 3

What are your biggest concerns or challenges you hope we can address as part of this process?

Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Reduce engagement/meeting fatigue for the tribes. This happens within our dept as different projects are reaching out to tribes at the same time due to a lack of coordination.
Add text Increased demand on tribes	Add text	Unknown User Too often staff don't think to engage with tribes (lowercase c) until there's very little time left, which makes it difficult/impossible to do well.	Add text	Add text
Add text	Unknown User It would be useful to figure out how to pay for some of the tribal monitoring that is often requested. Not sure if there is a way to address this as part of this discussion.	Add text	Add text	Unknown User My concern is that we are still mostly focused on requirements and protocols when we really need to think of this as more about relationship-building.
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Approaching the tribes in the respectful way that is wanted by the tribes. Past experience has shown that what I thought was respectful (how we would typically approach other jurisdictions) was not appreciated by the tribes.
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Unknown User Change is hard. Culture shift is difficult. There will be people who resist and ignore. It will take persistence and encouragement to get folk to go above just checking the box.
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text
Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text	Add text

Question 4

Our team envisions active County staff engagement throughout the process to ensure the policy is both effective and practical.

Sharing your department's existing written guidance on Tribal consultation

Providing examples of effective or successful Tribal participation in past projects

Participating in these sessions and responding to requests for review and written feedback on drafts

What are we missing?

[illegible]

Appendix E: Draft Policy Feedback Tracker

Feedback Tracker on DRAFT Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy

To inform the next version of the Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy, participating Tribal representatives and County employees were given the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft Policy from mid-April to the end of May 2026.

All feedback received through meetings and via email has been documented, addressed, and categorized in the chart below.

Draft Policy Text Edits

Received	Feedback	Addressed
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Purpose Section - Opening paragraph to be added to call all employees in and make sure they all know it applies to them.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraphs 1 and 2</i>
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Purpose Section, Paragraph 3 One participant wanted to move this paragraph to the first paragraph rather than starting with legal requirements	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraphs 1 and 2</i>
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section One participant emphasized their desire for stronger language throughout. For instance, preferring “are required” rather than the use of “shall strive”	We have reviewed the Policy language in response to this feedback and have made strengthening changes where feasible. We have been deliberate about using realistic language in certain provisions. It is intended to ensure that the expectations set are ones the County can honestly stand behind both internally and externally. Overpromising in Policy language can ultimately undermine trust if those commitments are not consistently met in practice. We anticipate that as implementation goes on, stronger requirements may be appropriate and will consider this again through the sunset review process.
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Add in language around Starting Point (end or beginning?) -this is intended to be a living, breathing document. Participants said that note is something they would like to see in the document text.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See final paragraph of the Policy section.</i>

Received from County staff via email	Responsible Department A County staff member shared, “Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (LANAIC) staff will provide leadership in implementation and technical assistance to other Departments” — given the very small staffing of the LANAIC and the enormity of county departments, my hope is that resources will be provided to the LANAIC for consultants/staffing, as needed. I think of how inundated ARDI became when Board Motions that named DEI began to be pushed to ARDI, regardless of intent.”	The Policy language has been adjusted accordingly. The expectation that LANAIC staff will provide technical assistance to other departments has been removed. LANAIC is not, at this time, staffed or resourced to serve in that capacity across the full breadth of County departments. Where LANAIC staff are able to provide guidance and support, they will do so. This may also be able to be addressed in the sunset review process. <i>See Responsible Department Section.</i>
Received from County staff via email	Policy Conclusion: “All County departments shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Supervisors based on priority actions identified during Tribal consultation.” A County staff member shared that this would not necessarily be applicable: “Not all projects discussed would go to the BOS. For example, there may be tribal consultations for CEQA (Neg Dec) for an action that ends with the Regional Planning Commission.”	The original intent of this provision was not project-specific; it was meant to capture the broader themes, systemic issues, and relationship-building opportunities that emerge from consultation over time, elevating those larger insights to County leadership beyond the scope of any single project or approval process. However, the language as originally drafted created confusion about applicability across different decision-making pathways. In the interest of clarity, this line has been removed from the Policy. We may revisit as part of a future sunset review, where more precise language can be developed with the benefit of implementation experience.
Received from County staff via email	Purpose, Second Paragraph: “the County looks to the State’s NAHC Contact List” A County staff member recommended the use of “will use” rather than “looks to”	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraph 4</i>
Received from County staff via email	Purpose, Third Paragraph: “break the cycle of harms” A County staff member recommended	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraph 6</i>

	replacing this language with “systemic cycle of harm”	
Received from County staff via email	Purpose, Fourth Paragraph, second sentence A County staff member asked to Consider rephrasing this sentence: This Policy is not intended to extend State or Federally required consultation or deadlines to otherwise voluntary consultation undertaken pursuant to this Policy.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraph 7</i>
Received from County staff via email	Definitions A County staff member had edits for two definitions. For Local Tribes, they recommended not having an acronym in this definition. For Tribal Consultation, they recommended replacing the second sentence of the definition with, “In this Policy, Tribal Consultation also refers to consultation on all matters of mutual interest between the County and Local Tribal Governments beyond those required under State and Federal law.”	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Definitions Section.</i>
Received from County staff via email	Policy Section IV.b. A County staff member recommended rewriting this section as, “The County shall discuss confidentiality concerns and expectations at the outset of consultation and as the consultation progresses or circumstances change, as needed. The County shall incorporate measures designed to protect sensitive information shared during the consultation process, such as those pertaining to sacred sites. Information identified by Local Tribal Governments as sensitive shall be treated as confidential to the fullest extent permitted by law. Local Tribal Governments shall be provided notice and an opportunity to intervene in the event disclosure is compelled by court order.”	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Policy Section IV.b.</i>
Received from County	Section V.a.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy.

staff via email	A County staff member recommended the use of “employees” rather than staff.	<i>See Policy Section V.a.</i>
Received from County staff via email	Policy A County staff member recommended doublechecking the use of Local Tribes vs. Local Tribal Governments in this context.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Conclusion, First Paragraph A County staff member recommended “(Board)” be added after Board of Supervisors and that County Departments be capitalized.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy.
Received from County staff via email	Acknowledge Emergency and Hazard-Mitigation Conditions - Wildfire response and certain hazard-mitigation activities require immediate action to protect life and property. The policy should state that emergency operations may proceed while still honoring consultation principles whenever feasible. This clarification will support alignment between public safety responsibilities and Tribal Government engagement.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Policy Section, second to last paragraph.</i>

Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List

Received	Feedback	Addressed
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Purpose Section, Paragraph 2 – “The County looks to the State’s Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List as its guide for identifying relevant Tribes.” One participant wanted to make this stronger/more definitive. Using the word "guide" leaves wiggle room	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Purpose Section, Paragraph 4</i>
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Purpose Section, Paragraph 2 – “The County looks to the State’s Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List as its guide for identifying relevant Tribes.” A couple of participants brought up a desire	The County will not be amending the language of this Countywide Policy to limit consultation to only those Tribes deemed "culturally affiliated" with a specific location.

	to have the Policy reference consulting with only the culturally affiliated Tribes to a location.	The primary reason for this decision is Tribal sovereignty. Determinations of cultural affiliation, ancestral territory, and Tribal identity are matters of sovereign authority that belong exclusively to Tribal Governments themselves, not to County staff. It would be inappropriate, and potentially harmful, for the County to assume the role of arbitrating which Tribes hold a cultural or ancestral connection to a given area of land. Relying on the NAHC Contact List for identifying relevant Tribes reflects a deliberate choice to defer to a State-level body specifically established for this purpose. The NAHC has the institutional expertise, governmental relationships, and legal mandate to maintain and provide this information. Using this list ensures the County's consultation process is consistent, defensible, and respectful of Tribal interests. Limiting outreach based on the County's own assessment of cultural affiliation would risk excluding Tribes with legitimate connections to a location, undermining the very purpose of meaningful consultation.
Received from County staff via email	Section V.b. A County staff member shared, "It may be important to consider logging outreach attempts, to whom, and the logic behind why specific Tribal governments were contacted"	As stated in the Policy, the County looks to the NAHC Contact List to identify Local Tribal Governments, providing a consistent and defensible foundation for outreach decisions. This recommendation also connects directly to the County's broader commitment to reducing the burden on Local Tribal Governments through better internal coordination. The Implementation Plan will provide further guidance on documentation best practices, including how departments should log outreach attempts in a consistent and meaningful way that serves both the County's accountability commitments and its relationship-

		building goals with Local Tribal Governments.
Received from County staff via email	Section I. Honor each Local Tribal Government's Authority On County staff member shared, "This is difficult to do when two tribes claim authority for the same area or project oversight. Guidance on how to navigate this situation, esp if there is conflicting advice or recommendations provided by two competing tribes, is requested to be included in this policy, even if the guidance is to request assistance from State"	Best practices for this situation will be included in the accompanying Implementation Plan. Determinations of cultural affiliation, ancestral territory, and Tribal identity are matters of sovereign authority that belong exclusively to Tribal Governments themselves, not to County staff. It would be inappropriate, and potentially harmful, for the County to assume the role of arbitrating which Tribes hold a cultural or ancestral connection to a given area of land. Relying on the NAHC Contact List for identifying relevant Tribes reflects a deliberate choice to defer to a State-level body specifically established for this purpose. The NAHC has the institutional expertise, governmental relationships, and legal mandate to maintain and provide this information. Using this list ensures the County's consultation process is consistent, defensible, and respectful of Tribal interests. Limiting outreach based on the County's own assessment of cultural affiliation would risk excluding Tribes with legitimate connections to a location, undermining the very purpose of meaningful consultation.

Government-to-Government Relationship and Meaningful Consultation

Received	Feedback	Addressed
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section I, Honor each Local Tribal Government's Authority and Recognize a Government-to-Government Relationship Participants agreed that the relationship aspect is currently indirectly implied in the language of the policy and they would like to see it explicitly called out if it is an intent of the Policy. One participant said the current draft doesn't clearly say the	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See the following mentions:</i> <i>Purpose Section, Paragraph 2</i> <i>Purpose Section, Paragraph 3</i> <i>Purpose Section, Paragraph 6</i> <i>Policy Section I</i> <i>Policy Section II.a</i> <i>Policy Section II.b.ii</i>

	government-to-government relationship or the intent to grow and maintain the relationship.	<i>Policy Section III.a.iv</i> <i>Policy Section Conclusion</i>
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy, Section I.e. "The County recognizes that each Local Tribal Government speaks only on behalf of its governing body or a plurality of its members and not on behalf of all Native peoples or communities." One participant shared that it will be important for the Tribes, especially the non-federally recognized Tribes to be on equal footing. They said it will be important to call out in the Policy and make it clear that one Tribe cannot speak for another Tribe.	This comment is addressed in Policy, Section I.e. Beyond the Policy language itself, this principle is also reinforced by the weight of California law. Under Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52) and Senate Bill 18 (SB 18), each Tribe that requests consultation is entitled to have its concerns heard and considered independently and on equal footing. No hierarchy exists among consulting Tribes under California law, and no Tribe's concerns may be dismissed or subordinated because another Tribe has already weighed in. The County is legally obligated to consider the input of each consulting Tribe with the same weight and seriousness. This means in practice that concerns raised by a non-federally recognized Tribe carry the same standing in the County's review process as those raised by a federally recognized Tribe. The County is committed to honoring both the letter and the spirit of this obligation in both legally mandated consultation and in areas of mutual interest consultation.
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section III. Engage in Early, Meaningful, Consequential, and Good Faith Consultation One participant shared that they think Section III in its current form reads like a checkbox exercise where doing the consultation is the end result. They want to see it bolstered to better include the purpose of why consultation is occurring and emphasize the intended outcomes. They said the	The County reviewed and adjusted the language in Section III as necessary in response to this feedback, with the goal of better conveying the purpose and intended outcomes of consultation and clarifying the definitions of early, meaningful,

	current language feels watered down. They recommended adding in the purpose/outcomes/goals language to the definitions in Section III, as well as how each term relates to each other. Another participant reiterated this need for purpose and outcomes. They said it needs to be clear that consultation is not a waste of a Tribe's time.	consequential, and good faith consultation. Recognizing the critical importance of these definitions to the Policy as a whole, the County also sought additional written feedback from Tribes to ensure this section reflected Tribal perspectives as fully as possible. No additional feedback was received. We will move forward with the current definitions at this time, while remaining open to revisiting this language through the sunset review process as implementation experience informs further refinement.
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section III.a.iii "Consequential Tribal Consultation means that Tribal input is seriously considered by the County and has the actual potential to materially influence a decision or action taken by the County." Participants said needs to be stronger and more clear about outcomes	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Policy Section III.a.iii. and III.b.</i>
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section III.a.iv "Good Faith Tribal Consultation means a respectful and honest dialogue conducted with transparency, mutual respect, and a sincere intent to listen, understand, and consider Tribal perspectives." One participant commented on the language around "good faith." They wanted to add that this is ongoing. For instance, if three years after a project, something new has come up, the Tribes that were consulted should be notified	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. <i>See Policy Section III.a.iv.</i>
Received from County staff via email	Section I.a. A County staff member shared, "To the extent that departments already engage community or invite public participation (for instance I'm thinking of the Underserved Cultural Community groups at DMH, specifically the American Indian/Alaska Native UsCC), might it be necessary to	Existing engagement efforts are valuable and Departments are encouraged to be more intentional about including Tribal governments in those spaces where appropriate, but they do not replace formal Tribal consultation.

	clarify whether departments are specifically encouraged to engage Tribal governments and invite to pre-existing efforts rather than create new groups for Local Tribes alone? I can see where this may get misinterpreted and complicated”	This distinction between engagement and consultation is a meaningful one and best addressed operationally rather than within the Policy itself. The Implementation Plan will provide clearer guidance on engagement vs. consultation, and how departments can use both without conflating them.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Guiding Principles, II, Extend Beyond Legal and Regulatory Consultation Requirements Clarify Consultation Trigger Points for Land and Fire-Prevention Activities (i.e., types of projects or field activities require consultation). Our Forestry operations include vegetation management, fuel reduction, defensible space inspections, ecological restoration, and prescribed fire planning. Therefore, would the consultation triggers include new projects, maintenance cycles, discretionary land-use actions, or County-owned lands?	Where State and Federal law already establish consultation requirements, those trigger points are defined by existing statute and regulation, and the Policy operates within and alongside those frameworks. Those mandated triggers are not altered by this Policy. For consultation that goes beyond legal minimums, the County's approach at this time remains discretionary rather than prescriptive. The Policy is intentionally focused on establishing a consistent, principled approach to how the County engages Local Tribal Governments, rather than enumerating every project type or activity that may warrant outreach. The Implementation Plan will include examples of the types of projects and field activities where Tribal consultation would be expected or encouraged, as well as best practices and guidance.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Guiding Principles, II, Extend Beyond Legal and Regulatory Consultation Requirements Strengthen the Role of Tribal Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) - The policy acknowledges TEK, but it could more explicitly state how Tribal	This Policy is focused on establishing the framework and principles for how the County approaches Tribal consultation, not on prescribing the specific ways Tribal knowledge may

	ecological practices may inform risk-reduction activities including vegetation standards, cultural burning partnerships, watershed stewardship, and long-term forest health strategies?	inform County programs and practices. Tribes also do not share a uniform approach to TEK. The decision of whether, how, and to what extent ecological knowledge is shared is a sovereign determination that belongs to each Tribe individually. If TEK sharing and ecological partnership emerge from consultations, that is a valued outcome, but it must be led by the Tribe.
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Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Other Agreements

Received	Feedback	Addressed
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section II.b. One participant said they appreciated the idea, but every Tribe has had a different experience with MOUs. They said MOUs can be misused and are often not to the benefit of the Tribe. They recommended highlighting other types of agreements like consultation agreements and letters of intent in addition to MOUs, but they liked the idea of having something to provide a structural relationship. Another participant shared that they currently are working with some County departments on MOUs and they have also used other agreements such as access agreements. They said it could be an important guiding tool, but they have seen MOUs fail. They said the County should make it clear the length of time of these agreements, the limits, and just overall define the specifics of any agreement like this. One participant said they would like to see annual performance reviews or checkpoints for evaluating the MOUs if they are used.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. The intent of this Policy section is not to prescribe or promote MOUs as the default or preferred mechanism, but to ensure County employees are aware of the range of formal agreement tools available so that departments can work with Local Tribal Governments to identify the structure that best fits their shared needs. The updated text makes clear that the decision of whether to pursue any formal agreement rests with the Tribe. The County's goal is to encourage the use of these tools where they genuinely benefit both parties and support an efficient, ongoing relationship. The County also acknowledges the feedback around defining the specifics of any agreement,

		including timeframes, scope, limits, and annual performance reviews or checkpoints. Given that the appropriate terms will vary significantly depending on the Tribe and the nature of the relationship, the specifics of any individual agreement are best addressed within that agreement itself rather than prescribed in the Policy. Other reporting and review mechanisms will similarly be captured at the agreement level. <i>See Policy Section II.b.i, ii, iii</i>
Received from County staff via email	Policy Section II.b. A County staff member shared, “Any payment to a tribe for its expertise or resources should be addressed within the MOU with each tribe, rather than determined on a project-specific basis. As part of a government-to-government relationship, compensation should follow an established fee schedule or a mutually agreed-upon hourly rate applicable to all projects.”	Consistent with the decision on MOUs and other formal agreements, the Policy does not prescribe the specific structure or terms of compensation at this time. We recognize that compensation practices intersect with a range of different work types across Departments, and that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be feasible or appropriate across that full spectrum. Further exploration is needed to understand whether and how a standardized fee schedule or agreed-upon rate structure could work equitably and practically across different contexts. The Implementation Plan will provide best practices for how Departments should approach compensation conversations with Local Tribal Governments in a manner that is consistent, respectful, and reflective of the value they bring to the consultation process.

Received from County staff via email	Policy Section II.b. A County staff member shared that including Data Use Agreements (DUAs) in addition to MOUs may be more pertinent to some departments/issues.	This has been addressed in the updated Draft Policy. We left this section broad with “MOUs or other agreements” to match feedback from Tribal representatives while also encompassing instruments like DUAs.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Section II.b. A County staff member shared, “One suggestion that I'd make is regarding Section II.b.i. where it talks about MOU. Does this agreement include a stipend that sometimes tribal representatives ask for when we ask them to review plans? It is like a consultation fee which can be a very small amount that a formal MOU may be too much paperwork for what we want to accomplish. If not addressed in this draft policy, it can be addressed in the following implementation plan.”	Consistent with the decision on MOUs and other formal agreements, the Policy does not prescribe the specific structure or terms of compensation at this time. We recognize that compensation practices intersect with a range of different work types across Departments, and that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be feasible or appropriate across that full spectrum. Further exploration is needed to understand whether and how a standardized fee schedule or agreed-upon rate structure could work equitably and practically across different contexts. The Implementation Plan will provide best practices for how Departments should approach compensation conversations with Local Tribal Governments in a manner that is consistent, respectful, and reflective of the value they bring to the consultation process.
Received from County staff via email	Section II.b. MOUs A County staff member shared their belief that MOUs should be facilitated by the County as a whole rather than by department. They recommended that each department can develop a subsidiary agreement to deal with its own situations.	At this time, the Policy will not dictate the specific structure or process for MOUs. We will bring this recommendation forward for further discussion and consideration.

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Cross-Departmental Coordination

Received	Feedback	Addressed
Received from County staff via email	Section I.b. A County staff member shared, “Will any outreach to Tribal governments be expected to be flagged for the designated representatives? Will these representatives be expected to coordinate/accumulate communications to Tribes in order to minimize the burden and number of outreach attempts from different parties within the same department--or is that up to each department's discretion?”	To clarify, we are assuming the designated representatives referenced in this feedback are County-side representatives. The Policy does not and cannot dictate how Tribes choose to designate or structure their own points of contact. Minimizing the burden on Local Tribal Governments is consistent with the County's commitment to respectful and good faith consultation. The Policy does not prescribe a rigid coordination structure at this time, as what is feasible and effective will vary across departments. The Implementation Plan will address this more directly, including best practices for how departments can coordinate internal communications, leverage designated representatives to streamline outreach, and reduce duplication in ways that are both practical and meaningful to Tribal partners.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Guiding Principles, V Address Interdepartmental Coordination Expectations - Many of our projects overlap with other County departments (e.g., Public Works, Regional Planning, Parks and Recreation, etc.,). To avoid fragmented processes, the policy should explicitly require coordinated consultation workflows when projects span jurisdictions. This will reduce delays and ensure Tribal Governments receive consistent County engagement.	There is a need for a consistent, coordinated approach to how the County consults with Local Tribal Governments. The Policy establishes this as a guiding principle. Where projects involve multiple County departments, an internal coordination conversation should happen early so that departments are aligned on how to approach Tribal consultation before outreach begins. This does not necessarily mean identifying a single lead department in every case, but it does mean that coordination is a deliberate and planned part of the process rather than an afterthought.

		The Implementation Plan will provide best practices and practical guidance on how departments can structure those internal conversations, and coordinate workflows on shared projects.
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Consultation Documentation

Received	Feedback	Addressed
During April 30 Tribal meeting	Policy Section V. Ensure Consistency, Transparency, and Accountability A couple of participants discussed the need for clear accountability measures. One participant suggested a ledger to document the consultations done. They said the Tribes need a clear way to know the Policy is being implemented. They said there should also be a process for when Tribes feel good faith has not occurred. Another participant referenced the Koi Nation case and the requirements for documentation, noting its relevance to the implementation of this Policy.	While this level of operational detail is not appropriate to embed within the Policy itself, these elements will be captured and addressed in the accompanying Implementation Plan. County departments will be asked to build strong documentation practices, including maintaining clear records of consultation outreach, responses, meetings, concerns raised, and how those concerns were considered. Departments should be prepared to share their consultation records and processes transparently with Local Tribal Governments upon request.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Guiding Principles, V Clarify Documentation and Record-Keeping Requirements – Is there a specific system that should be used for record-keeping? Will there be a central department who oversees these efforts or that will create documentation standards? Clarification is needed on record ownership, verification processes with Tribal Government partners, and how departments should document the integration of Tribal Government input into project decisions.	At this time, the Policy does not prescribe a specific system or central oversight structure, as these are operational details that require further deliberation to ensure any approach is both consistent and realistic across the full breadth of County Departments. The Implementation Plan will aim to address some of these questions directly, with the goal of establishing transparent documentation practices and ensuring records are maintained for accountability. We also recognize that building and maintaining a meaningful record-keeping infrastructure may require dedicated resources. This need will be flagged for Board-level attention.

Training and Additional Resources

Received	Feedback	Addressed
Received from County staff via email	Section I.c. A staff member shared that guidance and training may be useful for County departments.	The Implementation Plan will be the first vehicle for addressing guidance and training needs. The Plan will seek to identify and elevate existing training and resources available to County employees. At this time, the Implementation Plan will not include the development of new training programs. However, this request is being flagged for Board-level attention and as a future resource consideration.
Received from County staff via email	Policy Guiding Principles, V Tailored Training Requirements – Will there be tailored training for our Emergency Operations or Forestry staff (e.g., cultural awareness, TEK principles, confidentiality expectations, and operational procedures for working near or within culturally sensitive areas)?	The Implementation Plan will be the first vehicle for addressing guidance and training needs. The Plan will seek to identify and elevate existing training and resources available to County employees. At this time, the Implementation Plan will not include the development of new training programs. However, this request is being flagged for Board-level attention and as a future resource consideration.

Additional Implementation Guidance

In addition to direct feedback on the Draft Policy, County employees and Tribal participants also provided ideas for the Implementation Plan, which will be developed following the Policy.

These ideas included:

- How Tribal consultation integrates with existing County processes such as environmental review (CEQA and NEPA), planning, and capital project development timelines
- Roles and responsibilities across departments, including coordination where multiple departments are involved
- Documentation and recordkeeping expectations to support consistency and accountability
- Approaches to initiating early consultation in planning and policy efforts
- Tribal knowledge-sharing processes, limits and expectations
- Practical guidance on handling sensitive cultural information, including confidentiality protocols, chain of command notification processes, map/data protection, and procedures for inadvertent discoveries during operations.
- Contact information for whoever County employees can reach out to about implementation

Appendix F: LANAIC Presentation Slide Deck

Los Angeles
County
**Arts &
Culture**



Los Angeles City/County
NAIC
Native American Indian Commission



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TRIBAL CONSULTATION POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

**LA City and LA County Native American Indian
Commission**

March 17, 2026



Today's Presentation

1. Overview
2. What We Heard from Tribes
3. What We Heard from the County
4. Next Steps



Tribal Consultation Policy and Implementation Plan: Overview



Consultation & Engagement

Tribal consultation is a formal government-to-government dialogue on actions that may impact tribes.

Tribal engagement is the broader term that encompasses both formal consultation and other opportunities such as information sharing or collaborative dialogues for building and maintaining relationships.



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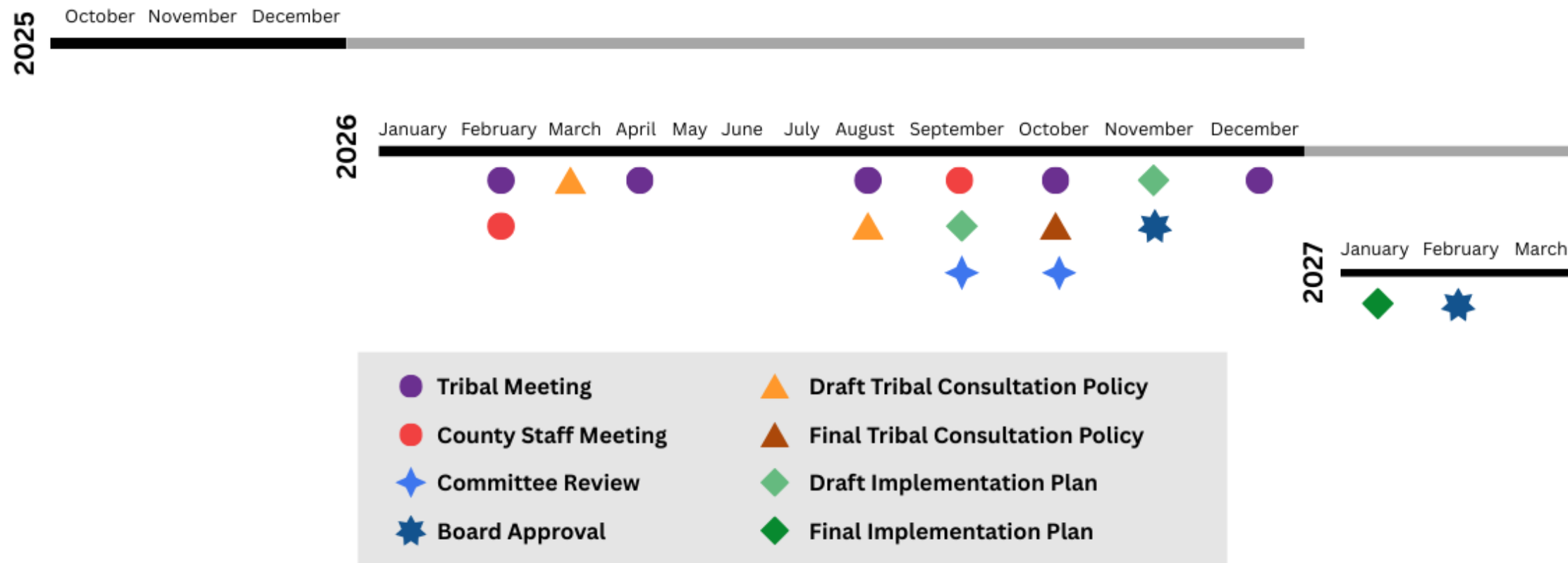
Policy Scope & Intent

- County policy does not supersede State law or guidance. Statutory requirements remain unchanged.
- The policy aims to standardize practice while recognizing not all scenarios fit a one-size-fits-all approach. We hope to identify where flexibility is needed through this process.
- The goal is for the Policy to provide clarity and consistency, not to tie staff's hands.

Why a Tribal Consultation Policy?

- This policy is intended to continue to ensure the County's Land Acknowledgment is more than a symbolic statement.
- One of the first recommendations and action steps listed in the Land Acknowledgment Implementation Guide and Harms Report was to develop a Tribal Consultation Policy.
- In previous processes, Tribal partners emphasized that County commitments should not shift with political or social changes, noting a documented history of broken promises when actions are not formalized or sustained.







What We've Heard From Tribes About a Tribal Consultation Policy



What We've Heard From **Tribes** About a Tribal Consultation Policy

1. **Prior Feedback**
2. Tribal Meeting #1



What We've Previously Heard From Tribes About a Tribal Consultation Policy

- This process aims to build on what has already been shared through prior efforts rather than starting over.
- We've heard that repeatedly asking Tribes to participate and reshare the same information has been frustrating and harmful.



What We've Previously Heard From Tribes About a Tribal Consultation Policy

- Consultation with Tribal governments should be clearly distinguished from standard community engagement protocols to reflect the government-to-government relationship.
 - Need for **consistent Countywide approach** to government-to-government consultation across departments.
 - Tribal Knowledge must be valued, incorporated, and compensated. **Consultation should be consequential.**
 - Balance County requests for engagement with **Tribal capacity and choice.**
- 



What We've Previously Heard From Tribes About a Tribal Consultation Policy

- As shared in the June 22, 2022 Report Back to the motion by Supervisors Janice Hahn and Hilda L. Solis, the Tribal Consultation policy should:
 - Extend beyond legal and regulatory requirements to encompass areas of mutual interest between the governments
 - Be guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)
 - Embed the following guiding principles: Free, prior, and informed consent; Tribal-led; Good faith compliance and good will to repair broken trust; Autonomy; Transparency; and Accountability.



What We've Heard From **Tribes** About a Tribal Consultation Policy

1. Prior Feedback
- 2. Tribal Meeting #1**



Tribal Meeting #1 Overview

Meeting Topics

1. Prior Tribal Input
2. County Survey
3. Discussion

Meeting Participants

- Gabrielino Tongva Indians of California Tribal Council
 - Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians
 - Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation
 - Pechanga Band of Indians
 - Juaneño Band of Mission Indians, Acjachemen Nation
 - Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians
 - San Fernando Band of Mission Indians
 - Gabrielino/Tongva Nation
 - Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians – Kizh Nation
- 



Tribal Meeting #1 Feedback

- Consider an expansive framework
- Clarify government-to-government roles
- Transparency and accountability matter



What We've Heard From **County Staff** About a Tribal Consultation Policy





What We've Heard From **County Staff** About a Tribal Consultation Policy

1. **County-Wide Survey**
2. County Staff Meeting



County Staff Survey: Overview

Purpose of the Survey:

- Understand how staff currently engage with Tribes
- Identify gaps in knowledge, resources, and coordination
- Introduce the idea of a Countywide Tribal Consultation Policy that will strengthen respectful and consistent government-to-government relationships with Tribes
- To begin this process, we distributed a survey to County staff.
- **137** staff members from **29** different departments responded.



County Staff Survey: Feedback

- How County work currently intersects with Tribes
 - Where staff say they need to learn more
 - What staff believe the policy should accomplish
 - What staff want to see in the policy/plan
 - Concerns staff raised about doing this well
- 



What We've Heard From **County Staff** About a Tribal Consultation Policy

1. County-Wide Survey
2. **County Staff Meeting**



County Staff Meeting: Overview

Meeting Topics

1. County Survey
2. What We Heard From Tribes
3. Discussion

Participating Departments

- Regional Planning
- Public Works
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Sustainability
- ARDI
- Natural History Museum
- Department of Health Services
- Department of Mental Health
- County Library
- County Counsel
- Beaches & Harbors
- Agricultural Commissioner Weights & Measures
- Homeless Services
- Internal Services
- Office of Supervisor Lindsey Horvath
- Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors



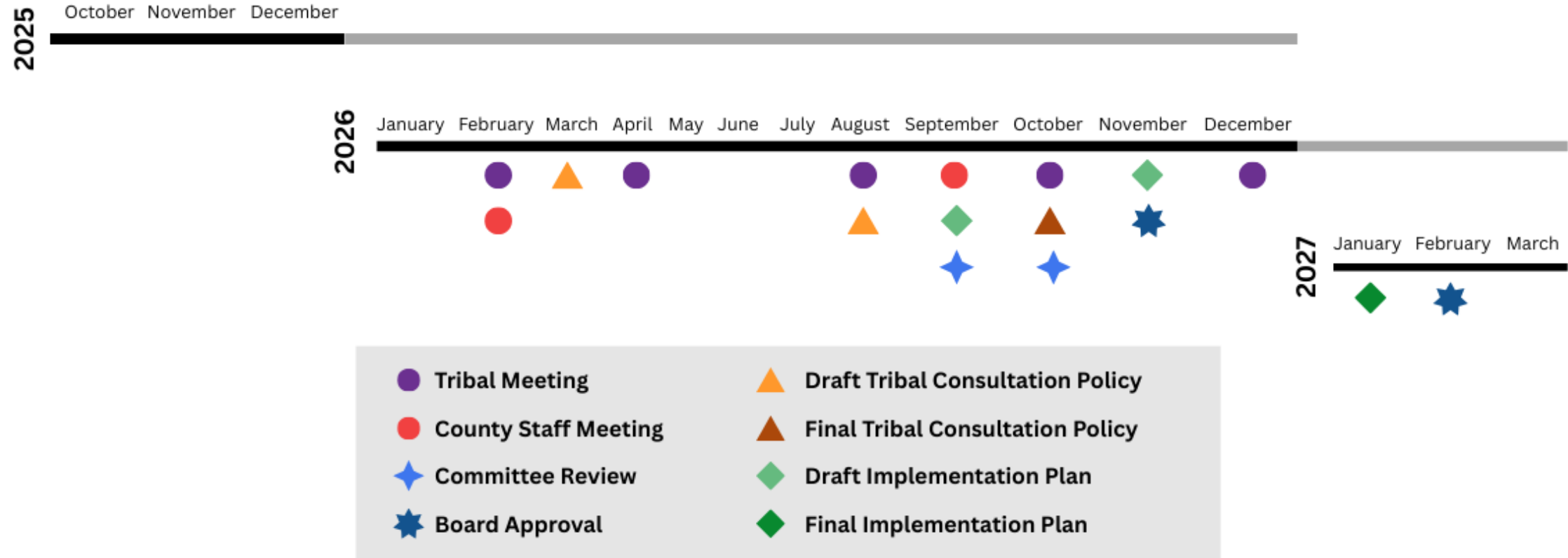
County Staff Meeting: Feedback

- Establish accountability mechanisms to ensure policy implementation
- Developing meaningful understanding of Tribal needs and interests
- Establishing a centralized support system for staff



Next Steps







Thank you!