

# Exploring Equitable Governance Options for Nature-based Infrastructure

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## What's coming...

**Context Setting:** Quick presentation to get us on the same page and share scenario we'll explore in small groups

**Small Group Discussion:** Breakout into small groups with a facilitator with guiding questions to problem solve


**Share Out:** Come back together to share key takeaways



## Climate Governance

**What is it and  
why bother?**





**North Richmond, Unincorporated  
Contra Costa County**

## Where We Started

- The **Resilient by Design Challenge** (2017) brought community and practitioners together to create conceptual designs for flood resilience and neighborhood greening.
- **Initial study completed to assess governance options** for study locations around Contra Costa, one of them being North Richmond (2021)
- In 2022/2023, a design team (led by Mithun) worked in partnership with a comprehensive stakeholder group to produce the **North Richmond Collaborative Shoreline Plan** with **30% conceptual design** for a living levee.

## Partners

- **County** (local government due to unincorporated status)
- **SFEI** (regional agency focused on ecology and climate adaptation)
- **Greenbelt Alliance** (regional non-profit with background in collaborative strategies)
- **The Watershed Project** (local non-profit)
- **Mithun** (design lead)
- **West County Wastewater District** (public agency, wastewater treatment facility at risk)

## Where We're At Now

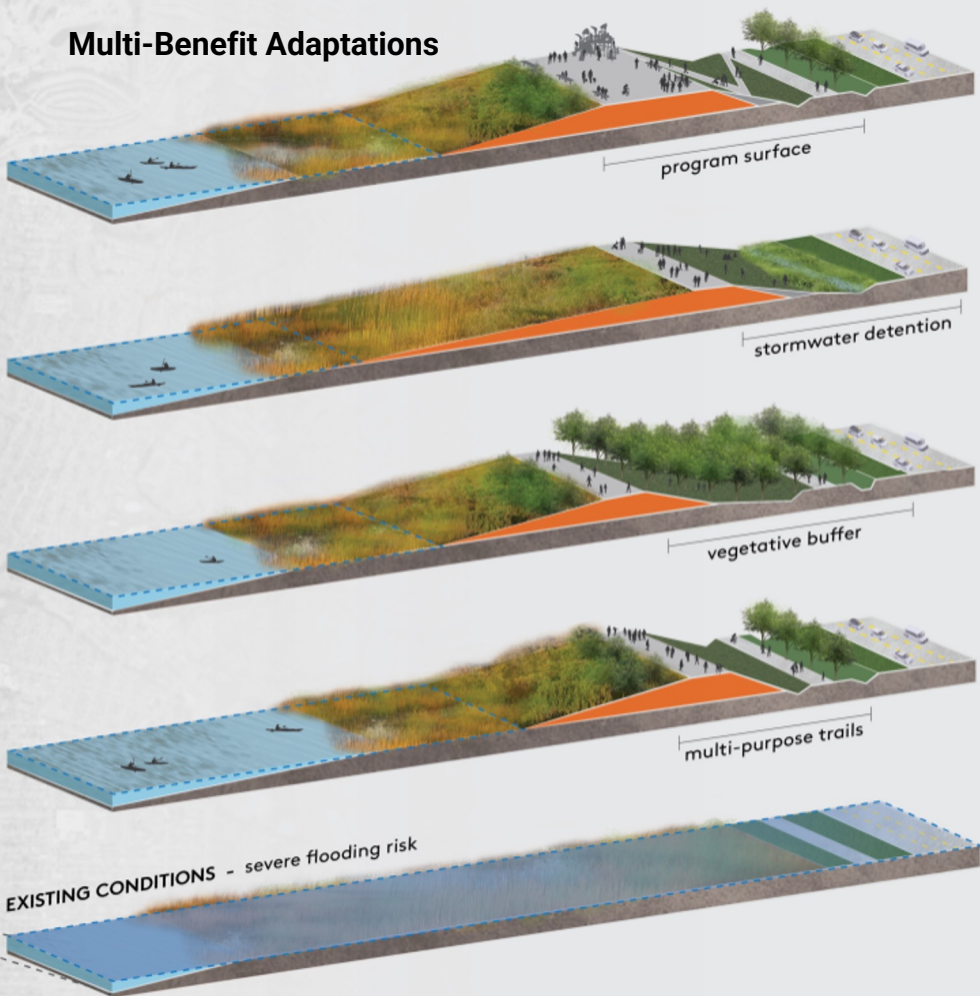
Authorization for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to support the full Collaborative Plan was included in the 2022 WRDA, but sorting out governance is **a missing step towards** identifying the local partner who could fully participate in a partnership with the USACE.

LEGEND

- Proposed Levee Core
- Mean Higher High Water Level 2100  
6.06 ft NAVD88
- Living Levee & Nature-Based Features
- Mitigated Flood Risk Level

# North Richmond Collaborative Shoreline Plan

## Multi-Benefit Adaptations





## Questions Remain

1. Need to identify ongoing **Funding for O&M**
1. Need for a **specialized workforce** to maintain G.I.
1. Need structure for **community self-determination** that gives power to core organizations
1. Need for **adaptive governance tools** for **making decisions in the face of uncertainty**

# Examples of Governance Structures

Formal Special Districts	Districts created through Special Legislation	Other Entity Set-ups
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**Green Benefits District / Business Improvement District**  
(San Francisco Case Study)

**Geologic Hazard Abatement District**  
(Broad Beach Case Study)

**Special Act**  
(San Mateo Flood and Sea Level Rise Resiliency District Case Study)

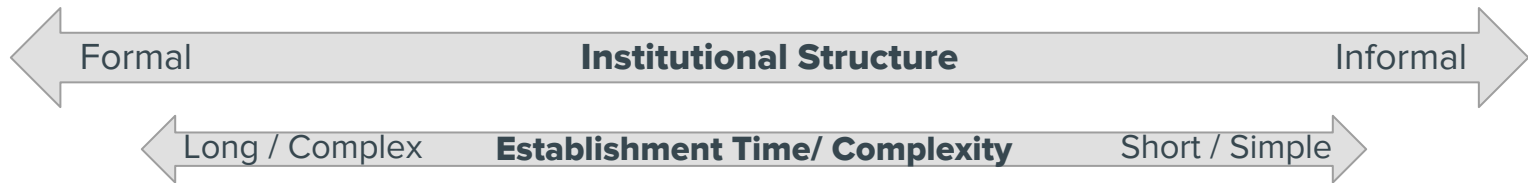
**EcoDistrict with MOUs**  
(Living Cully EcoDistrict)

**Community Services District**

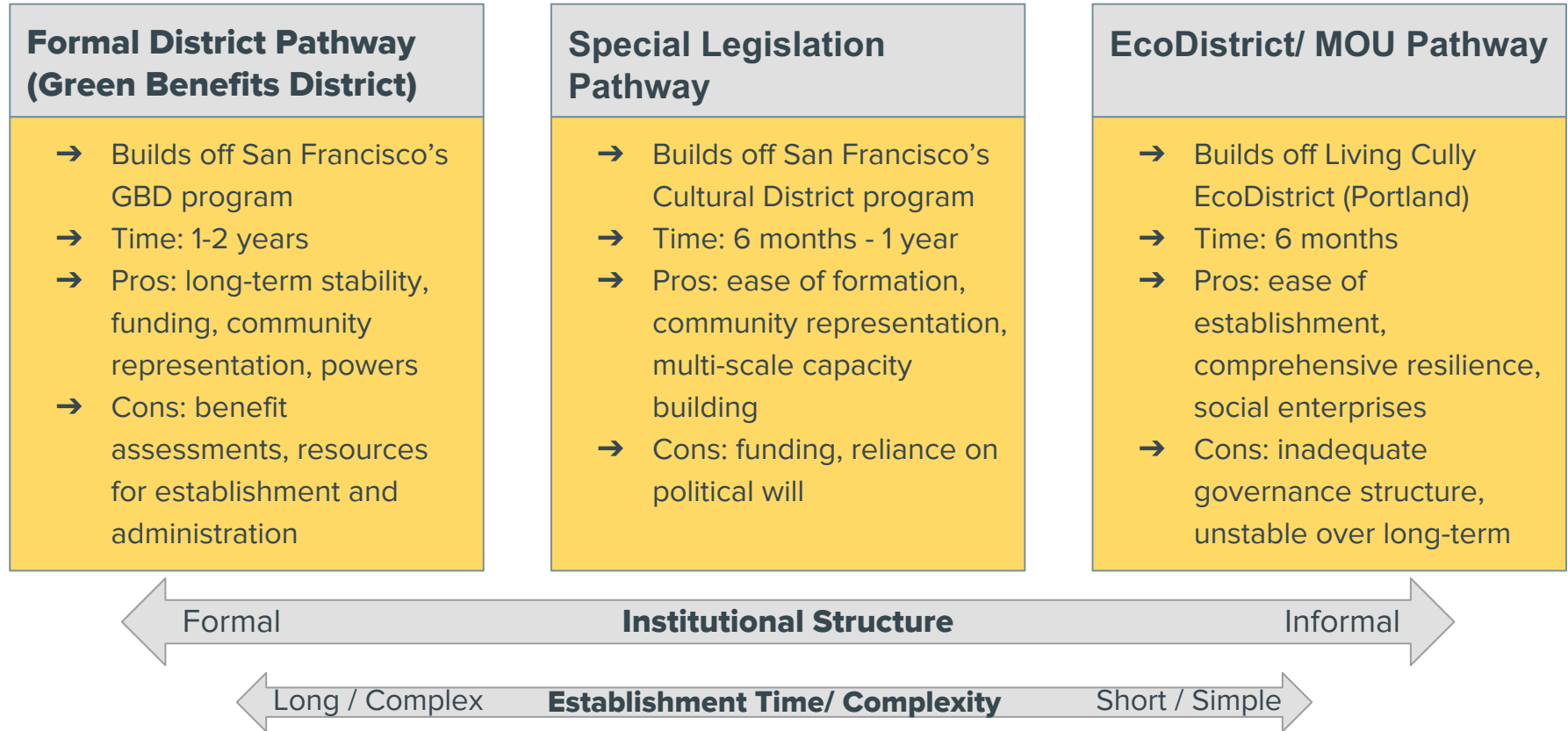
**Community Facilities District (Mello-Roos)**

**Local Legislation**  
(SF Cultural Districts)

**MOUs between existing agencies**



# Diving Deeper Into Trade-Offs



# Food For Thought

- How can we support **community self-determination** in climate adaptation planning while also acknowledging existing **capacity limitations**?
- Do you know of strategies that allow for **community ownership of nature-based infrastructure**? And what are some of the challenges that arise with community ownership and management?
- What's holding us back at the local government level? How can **municipal systems adapt to support nature as infrastructure** and people as a resource?
- How can we fund Operations & Maintenance for nature-based solutions without putting the onus on the community alone? Is there an opportunity for **restorative justice through ongoing O&M funding**?

# Find A Breakout Group!

*We'll come back together in **25 minutes** for a report-out*