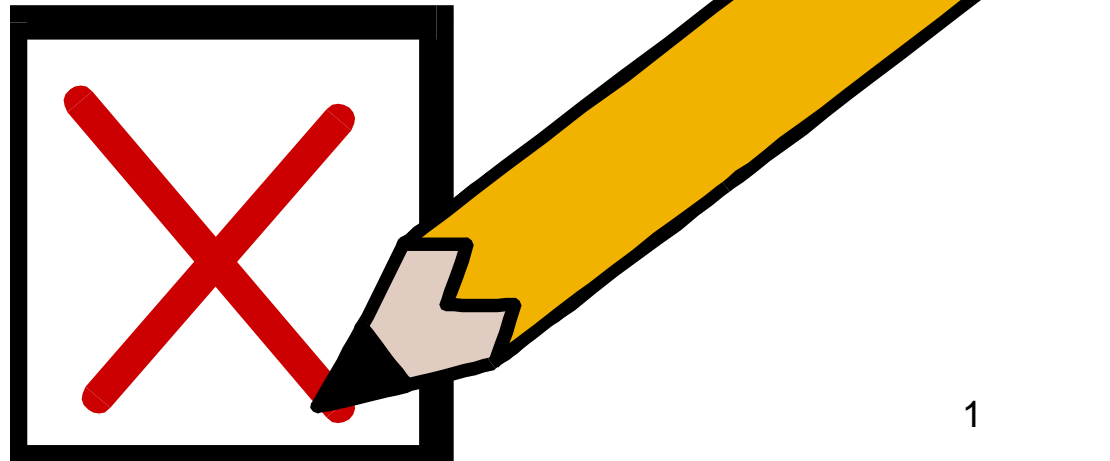


CIVIC PARTICIPATION

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What is Civic Participation?

- Voting
- Writing/calling local officials
- Participating in committees or town/city/county activities
- Speaking out
- Writing letters to the newspaper
- Working on a campaign



Voting

- To register to vote you must be
 - 18 years old or older
 - A U.S. Citizen
 - Not in prison or on parole for a felony
 - Not on a conservatorship that took away your right to vote
- Get a form from
 - Library, Regional Center, Post Office, PAI

Voting (Cont.)

- When do I sign up?
 - At least 15 days before an election
 - You need to sign up again if you move, change your name or change your party
- Do I have to join a political party?
 - There are seven parties in California
 - You can pick one or "decline to state", which means "Independent"

What Types of Things Do We Vote On?

- People
 - Candidates who are running for elected office
- Plans
 - Ballot measures (propositions) that make or change state or local laws

Some tools available to help decide how to vote

- Nonpartisan - just gives the facts and does not take sides
- Partisan - tries convince you how to vote

Go Vote!

Two ways to vote

1. At polling place
2. At home with an "absentee ballot"



What Happens When I Go Vote?

- What happens at the polling place?
 - You will be asked to state your name and sign a book
 - You will get a ballot to mark in private or a card to put into a voting computer
- What if I want to vote at home?
 - You have to apply for an absentee ballot in writing at least 1 week before the election
 - Mail in the ballot before election day or take it to any polling place in the county where you are registered to vote

People with Disabilities Have a Right to Vote!

- You have a right to vote unless a court has said you cannot!
- If you use a wheelchair or have other mobility disabilities, the voting place must be accessible to you
- If you cannot read the ballot, you can have someone help you read the ballot
 - Remember though, they cannot decide how to vote for you! You must decide yourself!

Small Groups

- Break into small groups and discuss the questions on the next slide.
- There will be 15 minutes to do this.
- Pick someone to record the information.
- Pick someone to facilitate the discussion.
- Pick someone to report back when we become a large group again.

Local Government Experience

- What city do you live in?
- If you do not live in a city, what county do you live in?
- Do you vote?
- Have you been to your city hall? County building?
- Do you know who your mayor is?
- Did you ever call a city/county official? Why?
- Did you ever work on a political campaign?
- Have you had experience working with your local government?
- What do you want to learn today?
- Why did you decide to come to this workshop?

Civic Participation Tool

- To help identify public policy issues to work on
- Develop a plan to work on the public policy issues
- What is a public policy issue?

Public Policy

- Something handled by a government branch or department
- This workshop will focus on local government issues
- Examples of Public Policy Issues are



Public Policy Issues

- Housing
- Transportation
- Accessibility
- Health Care
- Safety
- Education
- Parks and Recreation
- Recycling

Vote on Issues

- Pass out ballots
- Everyone votes
- Issue with most votes is one to work on for remainder of the session

San Diego City Structure

- Mayor, City Council, City Attorney, City Manager, City Clerk
- Boards and Commissions, City Task Forces
- City Agencies



San Diego County Government Structure

- Board of Supervisors
- Chief Administrative
- Finance/General Government
- Community Services Group
- Health and Human Services Agency
- Land Use and Environment Group
- Public Safety Group

Strategies for Action

- Who can address this issue?
- What do we want changed or addressed?
- Where does this action or change need to take place?
- When is the best time to address the issue?
- Why is the issue important to address?
- How will we address it?

Strategies to Use

- Attending a committee (or other meeting)
- Calling, visiting or writing an official
- Contacting other groups/organizations that might have an interest
- Participate in a forum or activity related to the issue
- Write a letter to the editor or other media action

Small Groups Again

- Decide what issue you want to work on from the list
- Get into a small group to discuss questions on the next slide and
- Fill out the Civic Participation Tool



Next Steps

- What is your issue?
- What steps will you take to resolve your issue?
- Who will help you?
- When will you report back to your self help group?

Large Group/Wrap-Up

- Meet again to discuss what you have done on your issue?
- When?
- Who will facilitate the next meeting?
- Do you have everything you need?
- Does everyone have a mentor/facilitator that needs one?
- Thank you

The End!

