

Indigenous Tribal Signage Pilot Program

Elevating Stories from the
Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians



Description:

In 2018, the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians (“FTBMI” or “Tribe”) established the Tataviam Land Conservancy (TLC), a 501(c)3 non-profit, to protect and promote the understanding of cultural, biological, and historical resources on sacred lands and cultural properties. As part of a larger educational effort, TLC has spearheaded an Indigenous Tribal Signage Pilot Project to place interpretive signs throughout the Tribe’s ancestral territory. Created by and for the Fernandeño Tataviam community, these signs will authentically showcase FTBMI’s past, present, and future to the millions of residents and visitors who hike and travel throughout the San Fernando Valley. Many are unaware of the First People of this land and their history. These signs will help uplift FTBMI visibility and culture. TLC is creating these signs in partnership with the FTBMI Tribal Administration Office, Tribal elders, and Tribal citizens who have contributed their knowledge and visions throughout the process.

Timeline:

Planning Phase (Community Outreach, Research, and Design): Target completion by Feb. 2023

Implementation Phase (Approvals, Fabrication, and Installation): Target completion by Feb. 2024

Sign Concepts:

These informational signs will allow visitors to understand FTBMI history through immersive storytelling and engaging text. Signage locations (estimated 4-5 parks throughout the San Fernando Valley) will be at historical village sites that are culturally significant to the Tribe. A series of upright panels will be placed along a walking trail or park pathway to guide visitors through the narrative. These panels may have shade covers and/or native plant installations.

Multimedia elements:

These signs will include QR codes linking to TLC’s website as well as potential audio recordings of elders’ voices for accessibility and additional storytelling.

Progress to Date:

TLC has successfully distributed ~70 community engagement surveys to FTBMI Tribal Citizens for feedback on the signage project. We have also conducted a focus group to solicit input and ideas from the community. A history consultant has been working with TLC to create mockup content and design for the signage. Finally, TLC is in the process of working with various landowners and entities, including LA Recreation and Parks and the San Fernando Mission, to establish agreements on signage installations. Next

steps include creating a Tribal signage handbook and working with design and fabrication firms to implement visions into constructed signs.