



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Green Zones Report and Website Show How People-Powered Planning Can Transform Toxic Hot Spots into Green Zones**

**Oakland, CA | November 27, 2018** — Today, the California Environmental Justice Alliance (CEJA) launched a Green Zones Initiative website and 2018 report that demonstrate how people-powered planning is bringing affordable housing, clean air, and sustainable and equitable development to nine communities across California.

The new website ([calgreenzones.org](http://calgreenzones.org)) lifts up the policies, people and places featured in CEJA's [Green Zones 2018](#) report with new updates, in-depth interviews and guidance on policy implementation. This new comprehensive resource for community advocates, city planners and reporters illuminates the field of land-use planning with environmental justice analysis and case studies that have improved air quality, public health, and economic opportunity..

**On Tuesday, December 4, 2018, 3:00 - 4:30pm** CEJA will be hosting a webinar featuring **Ericka Flores** (*Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice—Inland Valley*), **Carolina Martinez** (*Environmental Health Coalition—San Diego*), **Chelsea Tu** (*Center on Race Poverty and the Environment—San Joaquin Valley*) and **Ashley Werner** (*Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability—Fresno*). ([Full presenter bios](#))

**Press are invited to join the briefing by registering at:**

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6754022147844341763>

*This expert panel* will address recent developments in the Green Zones Initiative including:

- In Southern San Joaquin Valley, Arvin City Council passed a groundbreaking ordinance to become the first city in oil-rich Kern County to put limits on oil and gas drilling. During this 2018 midterm election, the town resisted a flood of oil and gas Political Action Committee spending and held on to a City Council majority that will maintain EJ priorities.
- In the San Diego region, community-led planning in National City led to the development of over 200 affordable housing units as part of a Paradise Creek Affordable Housing Project, which will also produce a community park, bike paths, and hiking trails along a restored creek area.
- In West Fresno, strong and sustained advocacy led to the creation of the Southwest Fresno Specific Plan, which will improve public health by prohibiting new industrial development within the community and prioritizing investments in housing, parks, transportation, grocery stores, a new community college, among other resources.

Sign up for the briefing here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/6754022147844341763>

“Green Zones exemplify what all poor, polluted communities could become: clean, healthy and, most importantly, empowered. Green Zones are where the most marginalized members of the community decide and design what their future will look like. Recently, Arvin City Council passed a groundbreaking ordinance to become the first city in oil-rich Kern county to put limits on oil and gas drilling.” — **Chelsea Tu**, Senior Attorney at the *Center for Race, Poverty & the Environment, San Joaquin Valley*

“Urban planners don’t have the answers. Community-driven solutions do. People of color most impacted by toxic pollution have the innovative and effective answers if you let them participate meaningfully in the process, that is what Green Zones is all about.”— **Carolina Martinez**, Policy Director at the *Environmental Health Coalition, San Diego*

## Presenter Bios



**Ericka Flores**, Community Organizer, the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice (CCA EJ). [ericka.f@CCA EJ.org](mailto:ericka.f@CCA EJ.org). Ericka works alongside Westside San Bernardino community leaders to hold decision-makers accountable and address various injustices within her community. Notable campaigns that Ericka has spearheaded include: pressuring Omnitrans to remove potentially explosive natural gas tanks, addressing the diesel pollution from the BNSF intermodal facility, and fighting warehouse proposals near schools and homes in Bloomington. She is a proud alumna of San Bernardino Valley College and holds a B.A degree in Sociology from California State University, San Bernardino.



**Carolina Martinez**, Policy Director at the Environmental Health Coalition. [carolinam@environmentalhealth.org](mailto:carolinam@environmentalhealth.org). In 2010, Carolina joined EHC as the Policy Advocate for National City's Toxic-Free Neighborhood Campaign. In addition to earning M.A.s in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies, Carolina's experience includes environmental justice policy advocacy, collaborating with community groups on cultural and social justice campaigns, and international labor rights.



**Chelsea Tu**, Senior Attorney at the Center for Race, Poverty & the Environment. [ctu@crpe-ej.org](mailto:ctu@crpe-ej.org). Chelsea collaborates with residents and community groups to bring land use decisions and infrastructure investments that benefit low-income communities of color in the southern San Joaquin Valley. She also coordinates the policy team at CRPE. Chelsea received her law degree from the American University Washington College of Law with a focus on environmental law, and completed her undergraduate work in environmental sciences at the University of California, Berkeley.



**Ashley Werner**, Senior Staff Attorney at Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability [awerner@leadershipcounsel.org](mailto:awerner@leadershipcounsel.org). At Leadership Counsel, Ashley partners with communities in the San Joaquin and East Coachella Valleys to develop and lead legal and policy strategies that eradicate barriers to opportunity. She received her J.D. from Boston College Law School with a Certificate in Human Rights and International Justice, and her B.A. from Swarthmore College.

Visit the NEW Green Zones Initiative Website: <https://www.calgreenzones.org>

Download the 2018 Green Zones Report at:

<https://calgreenzones.org/green-zones-report-2018-download/>

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[California Environmental Justice Alliance](https://www.caleja.org) is a statewide, community-led alliance that works to achieve environmental justice by advancing policy solutions. We unite the powerful local organizing of our members in the communities most impacted by environmental hazards – low-income communities and communities of color – to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We build the power of communities across California to create policies that will alleviate poverty and pollution. Together, we are growing the statewide movement for environmental health and social justice. [www.caleja.org](https://www.caleja.org)