

6. Political Capital

Accessing Resources, Facing Turbulence

“ Well, my interest in what's happening with Cobb Area Council - get this community back and get more people here. And then just better define what we have here, what we want it to be. I really like the visioning ideas. ”

- *Local Artist*

The Cobb Mountain community is not an island unto itself. It exists in a may-layered framework within which significant resources are allocated and rules established. Local political capital is, to a significant degree, the capacity to influence those resource allocations and rule making.

Broad-based local participation in local affairs and strong alliances with County, State and Regional institutions, are bedrock assets that can help energize and guide the entire community's growth and development. A knowledgeable and involved citizenry raises the bar for intelligent development in the community that



takes the whole system into account. Building strong local participation in community decision making and intelligent participation in County affairs have three key benefits. First is that in the current environment, where Lake County

government is struggling to meet the needs of local communities, a strong local community organization can step in and advocate intelligently for and even augment County services. Second, the community organization can be a forum where diverse viewpoints can be heard from local residents. Third, robust local community involvement can mobilize local talent and concern to directly serve the community's efforts to meet common goals.

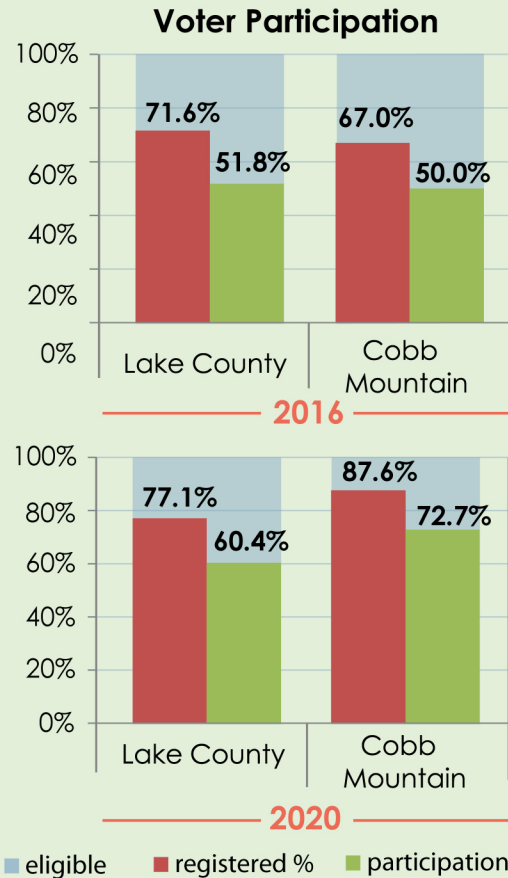
Connections with other Community Elements

Local engagement in local affairs has direct implications for the economy, local culture, and local housing development. A strong community forum like the Cobb Area Council also builds community cohesion (Social Capital).

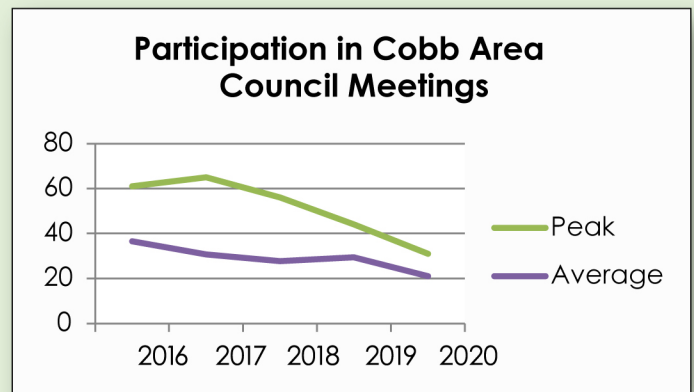
Analysis:

One of the unexpected positive outcomes of the Valley Fire is that it uncovered a wealth and depth of local community care and commitment to work together to rebuild stronger than ever. The establishment of the Cobb Area Council (CAC)³⁹ eight months after the fire was a watershed moment that brought together a cadre of novice organizers and leaders who have kept community awareness of local challenges and assets. One major accomplishment of the Council has been to obtain funding from the Federal Home Loan Bank of San Francisco and the Community First Credit Union to draft this strategy as well as to implement critical recovery initiatives including a local small business loan program. Each month the Cobb Area Council brings important information and speakers to the community, focusing on fire safety and preparedness but also on longer range development issues. The CAC has also been a key organizer for special local events that keep the community spirit up. Going forward over the coming decade, it will be important to expand and strengthen local participation in the CAC and find ways to identify and activate more community members to take leadership and functional roles in the organization.

POLITICAL CAPITAL DATA



sources: California Secretary of State Report of Registration, Lake County Statement of Vote, US Census ACS report



** March and April meetings canceled - May began Zoom meetings

ADDITIONAL POLITICAL CAPITAL DATA WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE:

- More precise tracking of participation in Cobb Area Council activities, including volunteer hours and committee work.

Political Capital Goals:

- Increase local participation in the Cobb Area Council activities
- Expand CAC activities to address key local issues, especially forest stewardship, economic development and housing
- Revise the Cobb Mountain Area Plan in cooperation with the Lake County Community Development Department
- Raise awareness of Cobb Mountain priorities with elected representatives at all levels: County, Regional, State and Federal

Political Capital Strategies:

- Do a CAC marketing campaign to increase participation in meetings and committees
- Expand hours and services at Cobb Resource Hub
- Investigate the establishment of a Cobb Mountain Community Development Corporation and/or Community Services District
- Begin work on update to the County's Cobb Mountain Area Plan
- Build relationships with State and Federal funders
- Work with County government leaders and departments to maximize local effects of County programs



“ I really appreciate the diversity; let's just speak of Loch Lomond first and foremost, because even just within Loch Lomond, there's so many different types of people. I really appreciate that -I had a gentleman come in this morning who I don't really know what his political affiliations were, but he commented that he felt safe enough there to engage with another patron yesterday, who was on the opposite end of the political spectrum as him. And they were able to have a respectful and engaging conversation, not a debate or an argument, but a respectful discourse with each other about what makes them tick. And I really appreciate that about the Cobb area in general.

- local shopkeeper

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