



TOOL 3

Create a Timeline

TIME COMMITMENT

6–10 hours

PEOPLE

- Park organization staff
- Community stakeholders

SUPPLIES

- Timeline template
- Interactive materials (stickers, sticky notes)
- Pens, pencils, markers
- Visual aids, such as magazines and photos

INTRODUCTION

Where does your project fit into history and the present?

Building a timeline with milestones and impactful events for your project, neighborhood, or city will yield insights into existing and past community needs and challenges.

While infrastructure reuse projects can create unprecedented benefits for neighboring communities, they can also become drivers of inequity for already marginalized groups. To avoid this, build an understanding of how your project and site are linked to legacies of racism (e.g., redlining) and how this past shapes the wants and needs of surrounding communities today. By completing the timeline in collaboration with members of historically marginalized communities, you will be better positioned to serve, advocate for, and share power with them.



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TIPS FOR USING THIS TOOL

- Identify and reach out to stakeholders impacted both positively and negatively by each historic milestone.
- The goal is to gain a deeper understanding of what your project and site mean to your surrounding communities. This understanding should, in turn, guide the work you do.

INSTRUCTIONS

PART 1

1. Do initial background research, outlining historic milestones in your community.
2. Consider partnering with a local academic institution or a community-based organization to help with this preliminary research.
3. Create an internal working group and decide on a format for the timeline. Discuss how it will be used by your organization. Will it be a public document? Will it be an outreach tool?
4. Decide the timeline's historic range (the years to focus on) and geographic area.
5. Decide on themes to explore. Examples include:
 - Your infrastructure reuse **project's history**
 - Urban policy in your city
 - Economic, social, political, racial, and cultural milestones
6. Do deeper research. Sources include the internet, oral histories, newspapers, or local libraries and archives. Consider dividing this work up among team members.

PART 2

7. Reconvene the internal work group to share findings. Discuss how to organize the information found. What must be on the timeline? Do the original themes still work, or do they need to change?

8. Begin filling out the timeline template. If you need help getting started, suggestions are available on the website. You won't be able to finish this in one meeting!
9. Finalize the first draft of the timeline and share it back with your team.
10. Collectively discuss how this timeline challenges and/or supports your ongoing work.

PART 3

11. Share a preliminary version of your timeline with community members and partners, to ensure you're capturing as much information and as many stories as possible. Ask them what may be missing and what is most important to acknowledge, and address their input.
12. Make edits based on their feedback. Continue updating the timeline to reflect new milestones, events, or new understandings of history.



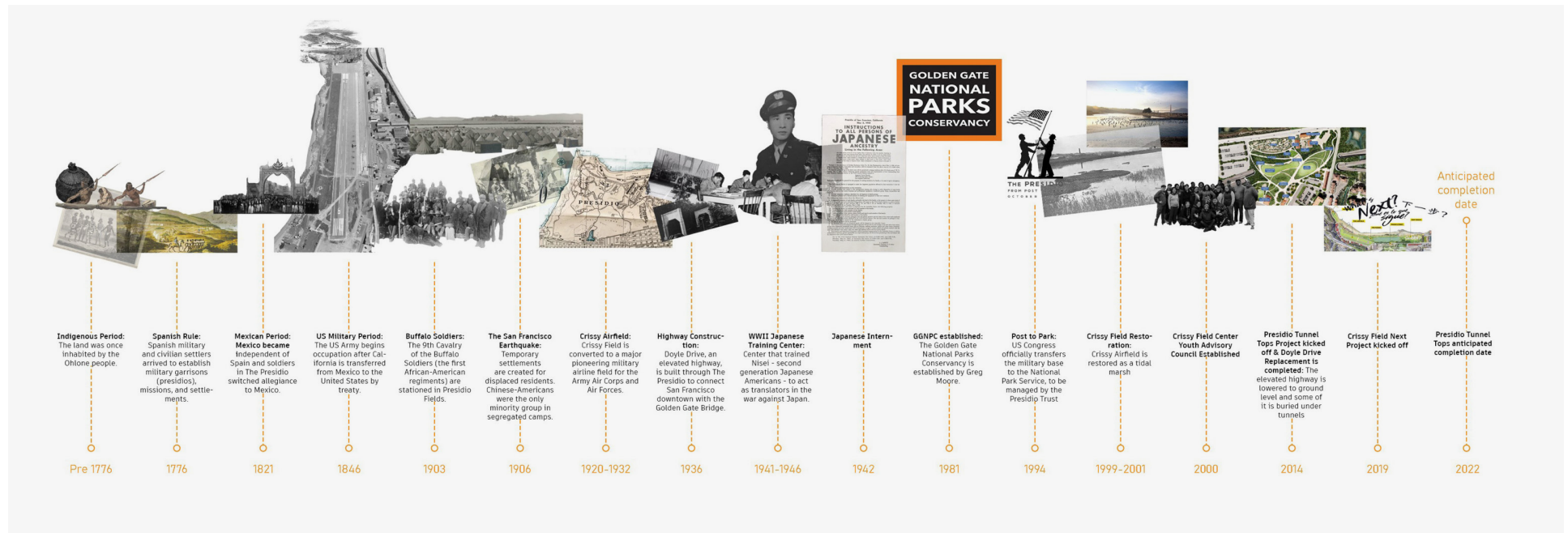
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TIMELINE EXAMPLE 1

San Francisco: The city's most important historic landmarks

IMAGE CREDITS

Image by: Jack Chen & Sarah Zou
Courtesy of Urban Design and the Color Line, Harvard Graduate School of Design





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TIMELINE EXAMPLE 2

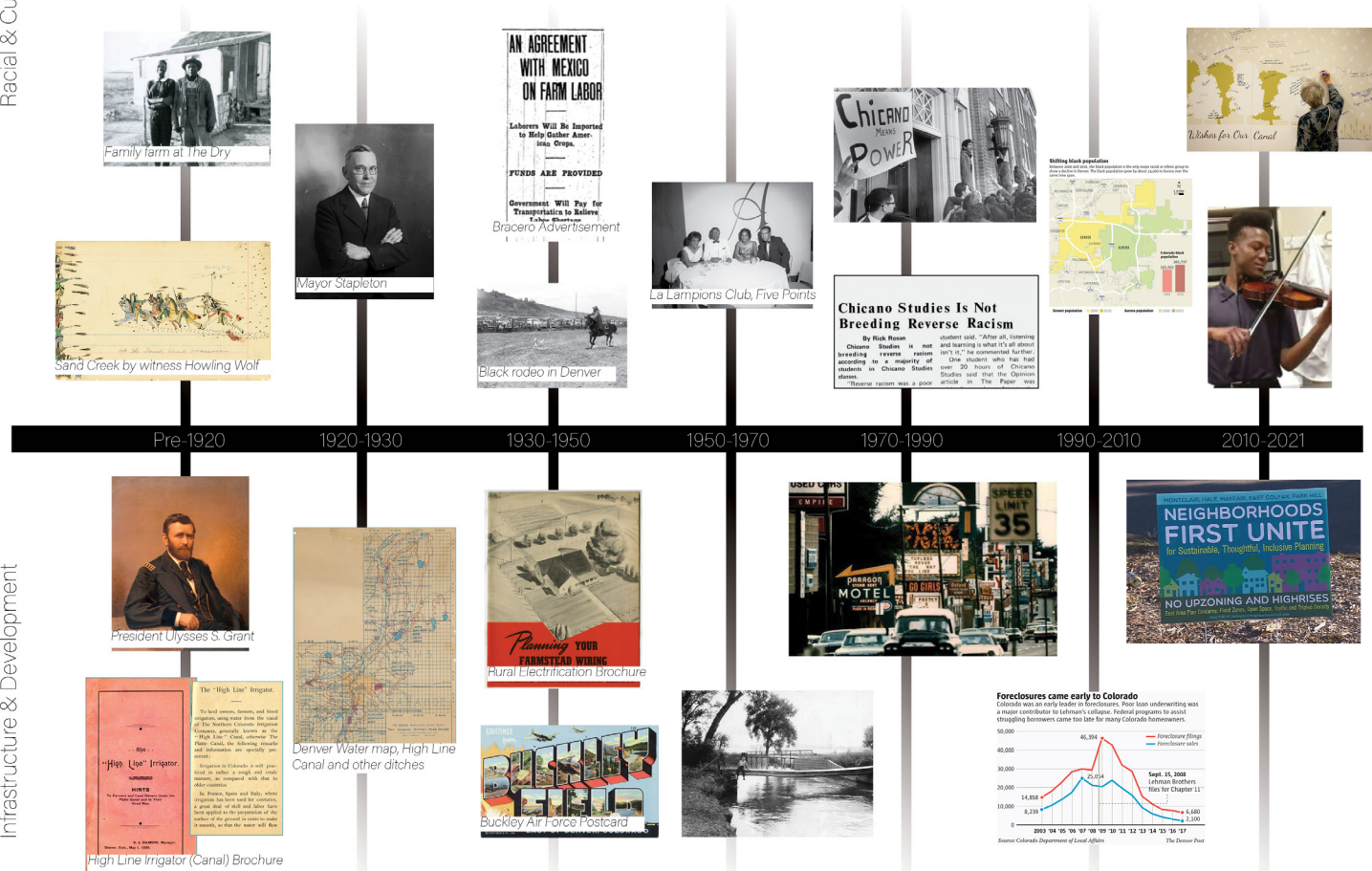
Denver: Depicting cultural and social changes in the city

IMAGE CREDITS

Image by: Miguel Perez Luna & Shannon Slade
Courtesy of Urban Design and the Color Line, Harvard Graduate School of Design

Racial & Cultural

Infrastructure & Development





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TIMELINE EXAMPLE 3

Indianapolis: Significant political, institutional, and infrastructural moments, with population and planning policy context

IMAGE CREDITS

Image by: Jiaie Azad & Asher Kaplan
Courtesy of Urban Design and the Color Line, Harvard Graduate School of Design

TIMELINE (1900 - 2020)

