

ASSEMBLY BILL 466
UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES REVITALIZATION PLAN
WORKING GROUP MEETING #7

Thursday, September 26, 2019 ♦ 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, room 406
501 N. Main Street, Los Angeles, California 90012

S U M M A R Y R E P O R T

INTRODUCTION

On September 26, 2019, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) hosted the seventh meeting of the Working Group for the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries (ULART) Revitalization Plan (the Plan). The purpose of the meeting was to: receive reports from the Water and Environment Committee and the People and Recreation Committee; consider a resolution recommending additional elements for the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Revitalization Plan; and receive an update on the formation of the Plan.

MEETING FORMAT AND AGENDA

The seventh meeting of the Working Group occurred on September 26, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, 501 North Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. 16 Working Group members and approximately 20 community members participated in the meeting.

Hon. Monica Rodriguez, Los Angeles City Councilmember, and Working Group Chair, called the meeting to order. Chair Rodriguez called for approval of the meeting minutes among the Working Group members and opened the public comment period. Chair Rodriguez then called for reports from the chairs of the Water and Environment Committee and the People and Recreation Committee. Sarah Rascon of the MRCA initiated the staff update with a report on the recent public workshops. Following the workshop overview, Sarah Rascon asked members of the consultant team to provide an overview of the input received through the webtool.

Members from the project team, Jaime Sayre PhD, P.E. (Tetra Tech), Mia Lehrer (Studio-MLA) and Jean Yang (Studio-MLA) presented an overview of design elements for consideration of a resolution supporting the recommendation to include additional elements in the Revitalization Plan.

Finally, Chair Rodriguez concluded the meeting by asking Working Group members if they had any announcements. There were no announcements. The team provided a reminder about future meeting dates.

During Working Group discussions and public comment periods, Esmeralda García (MIG) recorded key outcomes and discussion points on a wall-sized piece of paper, or “wallgraphic,” and Payton Smith (Tetra Tech) took additional detailed notes to inform this summary report. The following sections include a summary of the discussion points and a copy of the wallgraphic is included at the end of this report. Meeting materials are available on the project website: www.upperlariver.org.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

Public Comment

General comments provided by members of the public in attendance included the following:

- Add the Halls Dickens Eagle Wash to Verdugo tributary concepts
 - Maintain easements and existing trails by utilizing Troop 319 and the Glendale Youth Alliance to assist
 - Partner with local groups - Glendale Youth Alliance

Comments provided by members of the public pertaining to Item #8:

- Shift from the valley area and create linkages to the east of the River
 - Integrate more tributary areas that are east of the Arroyo Seco
- Consider the Hazard Park Project and Ramona Gardens in the Plan
- Consider the impacts of the Hollenbeck Park plan, may create separation due to freeways and stormwater drainage.
- The resolution needs a new assessment of publicly owned properties outside of the designated tributaries
- Provide access to the Verdugo and La Tuna Mountains – this is a gateway to conservation area
- Include more information on the areas that are above Verdugo

Committee Reports

Keith Lilley of the Water and Environment Committee reported that design areas were selected within each tributary and that the Verdugo Wash projects, Arroyo Seco’s Heritage Square, Tujunga’s Hansen Dam, and the Burbank Western Bette Davis Park were reviewed in detail.

Miguel Luna of the People and Recreation Committee reported that the committee discussed the public input received on design areas. Mr. Luna stated that design feature themes should encompass connectivity, linkages, and celebration of local culture. The committee also discussed the Draft Plan’s Executive Summary, long-term community engagement, and creating a meaningful plan roll-out to the public.

Staff Report

Sarah Rascon of the MRCA reported that recent community engagement efforts have been well attended, family friendly, and have had ample NGO participation. Ms. Rascon then updated the group on the expanded web tool outreach. Jaime Sayre PhD, P.E. reported that the community has utilized the tool to submit over 1,000 responses and to identify over 120 new opportunity areas. Ms. Rascon reported that the upcoming community meetings, to be held on October 10th and October 15th, 2019, would be utilized for the community to review and provide feedback on the Draft Plan.

Consideration of resolution recommending additional elements for the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Revitalization Plan

Ms. Rascon reported that the agency will be requesting resources to include additional scope to better achieve the goals of the ULART Working Group. This would include analysis of open space and housing opportunities, deeper analysis of the opportunity areas, and assessment for climate change resilience through carbon sequestration and habitat protection. This will also include producing the Plan in Spanish and implementation of an outreach strategy to roll out the final plan.

Mia Lehrer presented a series of case studies containing various design features (as examples) that could be applicable to the additional Plan elements.

Blue Sky Discussion:

Working Group member's discussion and comments regarding the Blue Sky thinking included the following:

- Burbank Western Project: The housing development project will include 573 dwelling-units
 - Affordable housing component or a riverfront Park space for public use are being discussed with the City of Burbank
- Verdugo Wash
 - Confluence: Glendale Water & Power provided comment regarding proposed projects not to interfere with underground water storage, how will this inquiry be incorporated?
 - Coordinate with local agencies i.e., Los Angeles County Flood Control to increase project feasibility
- Mainstem:
 - Rail yards at Piggyback are identified as a site in the Los Angeles River Master Plan update, coordinate accordingly
 - County Supervisorial District 5 requested consideration of operations at Piggyback to avoid impact to goods movement.
 - Flood control should be maintained
- Arroyo Seco:

- One of the Working Group members asked if the proposed soft-bottom channel below Devil's Gate affect water flow? LA County Flood Control District responded that no, it would not be affected because it is downstream.
- Housing Analysis:
 - The Plan should address project-area needs and align with community input
 - How was housing introduced into the Plan? This is in the County Plan and the intent is to be consistent to be comprehensive, relevant and address immediate public needs.
 - Housing analysis should include land assessor's data
- Project thinking feedback:
 - The input provided has been incorporated into the concepts, the Blue Sky concepts are a good approach and will take the ideas to the next level
- Plan Implementation:
 - Engage community stewards to discuss approach to roll out the Plan

Resolutions

The working group unanimously adopted the resolution recommending additional elements for the Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Revitalization Plan with the following amendments to the staff report under the following section(s):

- **Deeper Analysis of Opportunity Areas and New Assessment of Publicly Owned Properties:** The Working Group directed staff to undergo and incorporate additional analysis that can build upon already existent land use studies and information-specifically as it pertains to housing opportunities. Also, include within the Plan a dedicated section on an anti-displacement strategy that integrates best practices already employed or existent, including but not limited to exploration of land trusts and public land banks. Lastly, inclusion of a disclaimer which indicates projects/opportunities areas are subject to a feasibility study, jurisdictional coordination EIR and further engineering analysis.
- **Public Engagement for Plan Implementation:** This shall reflect Plan dissemination, not only implementation. This item suggests that communities be engaged prior to the final Plan release in order to build anticipation and community awareness for final Plan.

NEXT STEPS AND CLOSE

The project team briefly recapped the upcoming meeting dates for the Working Group and community engagement activities. Working Group Meetings will be dark in October and resume in November to discuss governance plan, implementation, and roll out. Chair Rodriguez then closed the meeting by thanking Working Group members and members of the public for their participation and attendance.

WALLGRAPHIC

UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER &
TRIBUTARIES REVITALIZATION PLAN

Working Group #7

MEETING
S.E.P.T.E.M.B.E.R 26, 2019

PUBLIC COMMENT

- ▷ HALLS/ DICKENS/ VERDUGO WASH IN VERDUGO
▷ INCLUDE MAINTENANCE - PARTNER W/ LOCAL GROUPS
- ▷ I-8 WATERSHED STUDY AREA GOES EAST BEYOND ARROYO INCLUDE - HAZARD PARK IN PLAN - HULLENBECK PARK STORM WATER R/O
- ▷ CONSIDER RES 8
- ▷ ACCESS TO VERDUGO Mtns LA TUN A CYN - GATEWAY TO CONS AREA 210 & 2 SECTION INCLUDE

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ▷ ENV. DESIGN AREAS BY TRIB
 - SELECTED
 - REVISED DETAILS VERDUGO WASH HERITAGE SQUARE HANSON DDM BURB WESTERN
- ▷ PLAN REVIEW BY CHAPTER VI & VII

PEOPLE & REC

- ▷ DESIGN AREAS PUBLIC INPUT DESIGN FEATURE THEMES:
 - CONNECTIONS
 - LINKS
 - CELEBRATION OF LOCAL CULTURE
- ▷ PLAN ELEMENTS VI & VII
 - EXEC SUMMARY
 - PLAN ROLE QT-MEANINGFUL
 - LONG TERM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

STAFF REPORT

- ▷ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMUNITY FAMILY FRIENDLY
 - NGO PARTICIPATION
- ▷ WEB TOOL EXPANDED OUTREACH
 - 1000 RESPONSES
 - 120 NEW PROJECTS

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS

- ▷ BATE DAVIS PARK - PROPOSED LINK IN LA SECTION
- ▷ HOUSING DEV. - TWO OPTIONS - 20% AFFORDABLE HSNG - PARK - PUBLIC USE
- ▷ WATER RECREATION IN S. LAKE? "BLUE SKY THINKING"
- ▷ LINED RESERVOIR CONFERENCE
- ▷ BRIDGE/BLEND IDEAS TO INCREASE FEASIBILITY
- ▷ COORDINATION W LAC FLOOD CONTROL - WATER INFILTRATION
- ▷ SAN PABLO AREA
- ▷ PIGGY BACK YARD CONSIDERED IN PLAN ADDRESSES NEEDS ALIGN INPUT

FUTURE MEETINGS

- COMMITTEE MEETINGS OCTOBER 10 & 16
- WORKING GROUP NOVEMBER 14
- DECEMBER 27

RESOLUTIONS

- ▷ ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS IN ULTIMATE REVITALIZATION PLAN APPROVED - AMENDED W/ CHANGES TO BUILD ON EXISTING PLANNING TO COLLABORATE - LAND ANALYSIS
- ▷ AVOID DISPLACEMENT OF EXISTING COMMUNITIES INCLUDE STABILIZATION TOOLKIT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TO PROMOTE PLAN
- PRESENT ALL PUBLIC COMMENTS
- ENGAGE COMMUNITY STEWARDS EARLY
- ▷ CONSIDER INCLUDING HOUSING STRATEGIES IN APPENDIX
- ▷ INCLUDE AGENCY COORDINATION TO ENSURE FEASIBILITY
- ▷ INCLUDE ADDITIONAL TRIBUTARIES

