

4. Governance and Funding

Table of Contents

4. Governance and Funding	4-1
4.1 Introductory Background	4-2
4.1.1 Management Structure	4-2
4.1.2 Management Purpose and Responsibilities	4-4
4.1.3 Post Plan Steps	4-5
4.2 Funding	4-6

List of Figures

Figure 4-1. Recommended Management Structure	4-3
Figure 4-2. Funding Options for Lower LA River Features	4-7

List of Tables

Table 4-1. Recommended Management Structure Organization	4-5
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4.1 Introductory Background

Several of the topics and ideas conveyed by the Working Group relate to the implementation of the Plan. Those key topics include the following:

- Funding and financing
- Management and operations of a governance organization
- Partners, stewards, and technical experts involved in developing and moving projects forward
- Environmental compliance and permitting to ensure benefits are optimized and impacts are minimized or avoided
- Data and metrics tracking
- Integrating overall programs with proposed plans and regional/local priorities

The recommended management organization within the Plan and this Chapter is intended to facilitate implementation by providing program and project advice to applicants. Through the organizational process discussed below, the following Working Group ideals will be considered:

- Promotion of equitable investment among River communities
- Establishment of cohesive governance benefiting overall river revitalization
- Highlighting of incentives for urban greening
- Facilitation of multi-jurisdiction collaboration
- Consideration of the Plan's safety and security guidelines
- Incorporation of sustainable operations and maintenance
- An engaged public and community-driven process that embraces implementation of multi-participant projects

Successful implementation will also require financial strategies that help provide adequate funding for the Plan. To this end, the Working Group has established the following priorities:

- Identification of a range of funding sources and associated project types associated with grants, capital improvements programs, and agency missions
- Sustainable and feasible capital projects
- Realistic range of project sizes and scales
- Integrated programs that can leverage economies of scale
- Coordinated public/private partnerships

It is anticipated that the recommended Implementation Advisory Group's structure and activities will lead to implementation outcomes that benefit communities in a socially-driven process.

4.1.1 Management Structure

In developing a recommended management structure for the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan, the Working Group reviewed several examples of management structures that have been used throughout the nation. These range from simple 1-2 committee structures to more complicated, multi-layer organization charts. The resulting, recommended structure offers elements that combine related groupings of roles and functions in a transparent body with public, community, stakeholder, and agency representation. Called the *Lower Los Angeles River Implementation Advisory Group*, the structure is shown below.

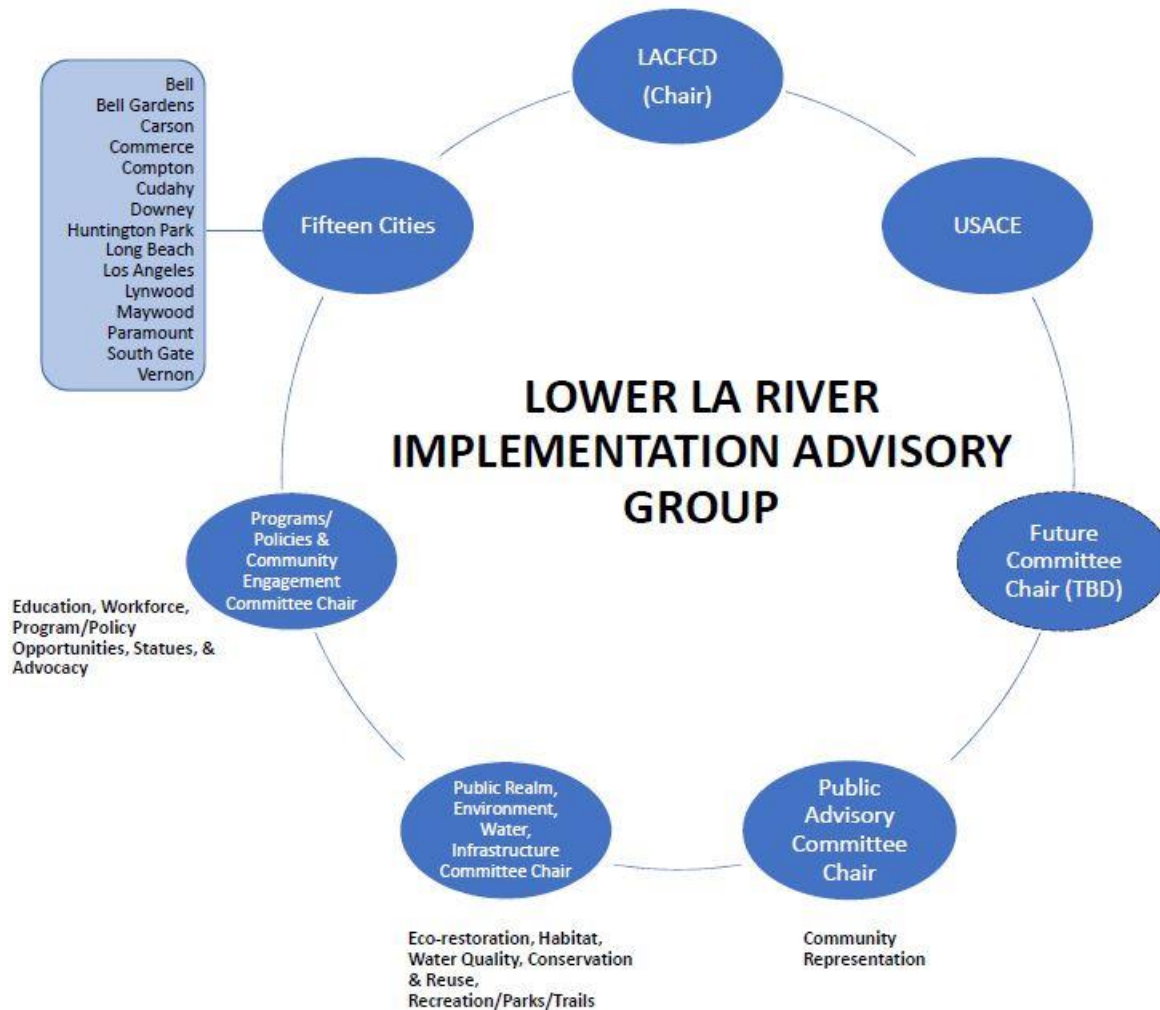


Figure 4-1. Recommended Management Structure

The Lower Los Angeles River Implementation Advisory Group (IAG) is intended to facilitate implementation by providing program and project advice to applicants. The following Working Group ideals will be incorporated:

- Promotion of equitable investment among River communities
- Establishment of cohesive governance benefiting overall river revitalization
- Highlighting of incentives for urban greening
- Facilitation of multi-jurisdiction collaboration
- Consideration of the Plan’s safety and security guidelines
- Incorporation of sustainable operations and maintenance
- An engaged public and community-driven process that embraces implementation of multi-participant projects

The IAG incorporates widespread representation from agencies, non-profit organizations, stakeholders, and members of the public. Each committee or sub-group has a chairperson, and each of the fifteen cities has a

representative. Future committees would be added as needed. The LA County Flood Control District would be the overall chair of the IAG.

4.1.2 Management Purpose and Responsibilities

Upon completion of the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan, in its role as an advisory body, the IAG will strive to reach consensus on issues presented before them, but ultimately, individual entities with jurisdiction along the river corridor will continue to have decision-making authority.

Once established, the Implementation Advisory Group would define their purpose and role based on the following items:

- Provide an open and accessible public venue for discussion of proposed projects/programs related to the Lower LA River and ensure that stakeholders continue to have a voice in plan implementation;
- Ensure proposed projects/programs are consistent with the goals, objectives, and priorities of the Lower LA River Revitalization Plan;
- Maximize multi-use opportunities and community benefits by encouraging collaboration among the many project proponents, communities, and organizations in the project area;
- Advocate for the value of the Plan by helping its members and surrounding cities and communities understand and value the Plan;
- Identify a group to implement the Watershed Education Program;
- Develop and maintain a “to-do” list that is continually updated and that will help keep the IAG robust, active, and transparent.

Notably, advisory decisions of the IAG would be informed by the following:

- The Revitalization Plan
- Agency responsibilities
- Committee recommendations

In its role as an advisory body, the IAG will strive to reach consensus on issues before them, but ultimately, individual entities with jurisdictional responsibilities along the river corridor will continue to have decision-making authority. While advisory decisions need to be consistent with the Plan’s recommendations, they cannot override actions within member agencies’ authority.

Table 4-1, “Recommended Management Structure Organization,” below, expands the areas of responsibilities of the various committees shown in Figure 4-1.

Table 4-1. Recommended Management Structure Organization

Entity	Area of Responsibility
LACFCD, USACE, and City representatives	Representation by the jurisdictional agencies; all fifteen cities as participating representatives; LACFCD would be the overall chair
Public Advisory Committee	Representation by community groups, NGOs, stakeholders, and the public; evaluates proposed programs/projects and provides input pertaining to the overall IAG including community health/identity and community interests
Public Realm, Environment, Water, & Infrastructure Committee	Evaluates and advocates for infrastructure opportunities related to ecosystem restoration, habitat, water quality/conservation/reuse, and recreation/parks/trails
Programs/Policies & Community Engagement Committee	Evaluates and advocates proposed programs and policies for workforce, land use, and education opportunities that are consistent with the Plan and local/regional/flood risk statutes; engages the community and develops partnerships
All Committees	All committees include overall consideration for community stewardship, equity issues, and outreach

4.1.3 Post Plan Steps

Once the Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan is formally approved, the Implementation Advisory Group would be established with committees consisting of current Working Group Members, with potential augmentation after the process gets underway. Subsequent steps include:

- Goals, objectives, and roles of the IAG would be reviewed and modified as necessary
- Guidelines and protocols for implementation of projects would be developed
- A group to implement the Watershed Education Program would be identified

Since the Implementation Advisory Group cannot fund or fully implement projects, a two-phase process is envisioned:

- Phase 1 is the Implementation Advisory Group—an advisory body that advances implementation of the Revitalization Plan but recognizes that it is not a funding body nor does it have project implementation authority. It operates in a manner similar to the Los Angeles River Cooperation Committee (RCC).¹ Projects proposed for consideration may be brought to the attention of the IAG by member agencies, outside agencies, stakeholders, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the public. The IAG then offers advice and recommendations consistent with their respective committees and agencies' responsibilities so that—when a project is eventually submitted to the County or a city for permitting, for example—implementation of the project is facilitated.
- Phase 2 creates a centralized District or Joint Powers Authority with funding and decision-making authority. At an appropriate time, the IAG will consider current models for implementation. During this time, the IAG will also consider ways to provide staffing along the river to meet educational and safety needs.

¹ The Los Angeles River RCC is an advisory body made up of LACFCD, the City of Los Angeles, and USACE for projects within the City of LA.

4.2 Funding

A critical element for successful project implementation along the Lower Los Angeles River is to maximize potential funding for projects. Funding will be an ongoing issue that should be approached broadly and creatively. There are opportunities to leverage existing funding sources in a number of ways including, for example, public/private partnerships, asset acquisition, and revenue-generating programs. Certain monies such as the State Revolving Fund can be borrowed against and be subsequently used to qualify for additional funds.

In developing potential funding sources, the Working Group has established the following priorities:

- Identification of a range of funding sources and associated project types associated with grants, capital improvements programs, and agency missions
- Sustainable and feasible capital projects
- Realistic range of project sizes and scales
- Integrated programs that can leverage economies of scale
- Coordinated public/private partnerships

Figure 4-2, “Funding Options for Lower LA River Features,” presents a matrix to assist in selecting the most likely sources for initial funding for the following categories of projects:

- Parks and Open Space
- River Modifications
- Bridges and Trails
- Water Quality Projects
- Operation and Maintenance

The check marks with circles shown in the figure represent the more likely sources of funding within any one project type. For example, water quality projects may have their best source of funding through the Safe, Clean Water Program, but could also potentially be funded through a variety of other sources, including: Caltrans’ Cooperative Implementation Agreements; Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement grants; future Water Board grants, EPA grants, and joint funding with watershed groups.

Funding for specific project types should initially be sought from the sources that target those projects. The County’s Water Resilience funding measure would fund water quality and water supply projects; park bond monies would be used for parks and open space; transportation funding sources would fund bridges and trails; and existing funding such as LACFCD, USACE, and city and county general funds would be used for river improvement and O&M projects. Project managers should pursue opportunities to supplement these sources of funding with federal and state grants, and future bonds. The matrix will be helpful in determining which of the potential funding sources would be most applicable to the various project types. It would therefore be necessary to continually update the funding source list as legislation and opportunities change.

Importantly, there is an opportunity to leverage various funds by “mixing and matching” a combination of funding sources. Park bonds and transportation bonds could prove especially useful avenues to pursue. Park improvements and related multi-benefit projects could be funded through the use of park bonds and grants. Project managers could coordinate bridge and trail planning with Gateway Council of Government (COG) corridor studies. Multi-purpose trails could be funded through Metro funds. Trails and bridges could be funded through Caltrans. Future monies generated through the County’s Water Resilience funding measure could be used for site acquisition for multi-benefit projects. Metro funds could be used to create open spaces tied to green streets. Additional grant monies for trails could be applied for through state and federal grants.

Figure 4-2. Funding Options for Lower LA River Features

	River Modifications	Bridges & Trails	Parks & Open Space	Water Quality Projects	Operation & Maintenance
City Funding (Capital Improvement Programs/General Funds)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existing LACFCD Funding	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County Water Resiliency Funding Measure			✓	✓	✓
Federal Funding (USACE, EPA)	✓			✓	✓
Grants	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parks Funding Bonds and Measures		✓	✓	✓	✓
Gateway COG Studies/Funding		✓		✓	✓
Metro		✓	✓		
Caltrans		✓			
Caltrans Cooperative Implementation Agreements				✓	
Stormwater Grants				✓	
Future Water Bond Allocations and Grants				✓	
Joint Funding with Watershed Groups				✓	✓
Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program			✓	✓	
Creation of Enhanced Infrastructure Finance Districts and/or Public Private Partnerships	✓	✓	✓	✓	

✓ indicates the most likely source of initial funding

Many of the components of **Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement grants** include specific “set-asides” for Disadvantaged Communities (DACs). A Disadvantaged Community Involvement Program (DACIP) was designed to better involve DACs in Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) planning efforts and to assist them in applying for projects with low matching fund requirements. The DACIP will include community outreach, needs assessment, and project development tasks to ensure that subsequent developed projects will provide the greatest possible benefit to the largest number of DACs.

Additional sources of funding for parks, open space, trail, and natural local water sources includes special taxes, such as the “Safe, Clean Neighborhood Parks and Beaches Protection Measure of 2016”. The special tax is designed to prioritize projects that offer the greatest regional benefit or serve the greatest regional needs. This includes communities along the Lower LA River that could receive priority Measure A funding based on their designated “high” and “very high” park needs.

Implementation of the Long Beach Municipal Urban Stormwater Treatment (MUST) Project could provide the stimulus for funding of specific Lower LA River water quality and combined park and water quality projects. Upstream cities will be able to take advantage of the MUST project by constructing water capture and storage facilities to hold water temporarily for release for treatment when capacity is available. The City of Long Beach is currently focusing on capture and storage sites within its jurisdiction. Upstream cities will be able to work individually or collectively through the revitalization process to fund appropriate water capture and storage facilities.