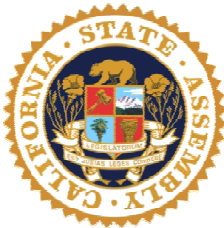


Community Engagement Plan

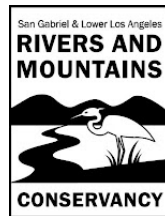
for the

LOWER LA RIVER REVITALIZATION PLAN

Prepared for:



Office of the
Assembly Speaker
State of California



San Gabriel and
Lower Los Angeles
Rivers and Mountains
Conservancy



County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Works

January 2017

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Community Engagement Plan (CEP) for the Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan (LLARRP) is to outline a detailed, community-driven approach and methodology to conduct an integrated technical planning and engagement process. The CEP outlines the overall approach to and goals for community engagement, objectives by planning phases, stakeholder groups and target audiences, timeframes, activities, and roles and responsibilities of the project team and community partners.

The LLARRP Working Group's Community Engagement Committee provides guidance to the development of the CEP, as well as implementation support. The sponsoring agencies that lead the technical planning and community engagement efforts on behalf of the Working Group include: Office of the Assembly Speaker, State of California; the San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and Mountains Conservancy; and the County of Los Angeles.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill 530 (Rendon), authorizing the creation of a local "Working Group" to develop the LLARRP. This plan will be incorporated as part of an update to the LA County River Master Plan by addressing the unique and diverse needs of the Lower LA River.

The Working Group's goal is to create a robust restoration plan that lays the groundwork for a revitalized Lower LA River that connects residents to the river that flows through their communities. The specific charge to the Community Engagement Committee of the Working Group is to:

- Provide direction on future visions, goals and objectives to guide preparation of the LLARRP, drawing on the viewpoints of all the cities, neighborhoods and communities of interest that lie alongside the Lower LA River;
- Articulate key community-based planning and design principles to be considered in the review of individual projects as well as to guide the physical development of the overall LLARRP;
- Identify recommended strategies and actions for addressing community concerns regarding the environmental, recreational, economic, social and cultural impacts of proposed infrastructure improvements and new development concepts on adjacent cities, communities and neighborhoods; and
- Serve as a communication link between staff and consultants and the many cities, community groups, organizations and public agencies that are interested in and affected by proposals that may emerge from the LLARRP process.

The Lower LA River begins near 26th Street in the City of Vernon and moves south to the LA River outlet in the City of Long Beach for a total of approximately 19 miles. The Lower LA River includes the County of Los Angeles unincorporated areas and the Southeast LA County cities which include Vernon, Commerce, Downey, Maywood, Bell, Bell Gardens, Cudahy, Huntington Park, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, Paramount, Carson, and Long Beach.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS

Overall, the goal of community engagement for the project is to facilitate a community-driven approach to developing the LLARRP. To do so, this approach will strive to achieve these goals:

- Design and deploy a diverse set of communication tools and activities that are accessible, meaningful, culturally and linguistically appropriate for diverse groups, and comprehensive in reaching the full range of community members
- Leverage the Working Group members' and community partners' community networks and assets to reach the full range of community members
- Facilitate seamless coordination of the community engagement process with the technical planning process to ensure community input is reflected in the planning output
- Provide comprehensive and transparent documentation of community input
- Link community members with the project's communication channels to promote ongoing project awareness and communication

COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

The list below represents the known communities of interest on and around the Lower LA River corridor who have a stake in the current state and future enhancement of the corridor.

- Residents of low socio-economic status who may be affected by increased real estate values due to river improvements
- Property owners and tenants of properties who may be affected by increased real estate values due to river improvements
- Community and topical advocacy organizations, including but not limited to:
 - Neighborhood groups and associations
 - Environmental justice
 - Culture, ethnicity and race
 - Health equity
 - Economic justice
 - Watershed, habitat and river management
 - Housing

- Mobility
- Environment
- Recreation
- Labor
- Volunteerism
- Public agencies and elected officials from local cities and unincorporated areas related to community and economic development: housing, public works, planning, public safety, parks and recreation, transportation, water, environment, and related areas
- Regional, State and federal agencies focused on environment, water, watershed, wildlife and habitat, transportation, and related areas
- Schools: Pre-K-12, local colleges and universities
- Business and industry: chambers of commerce, small business, major employers and job centers
- Utilities
- Non-profit and social service agencies
- Other communities and groups as identified during the planning process

KEY MESSAGES

Community engagement activities and communication materials will emphasize the following key messages, which may be refined during the course of the planning process:

- Today, the Lower LA River serves as critical public infrastructure designed primarily for flood risk management in our communities.
- Along the full, 51-mile LA River, communities and elected officials continue to explore how this infrastructure can have broader public value to quality of life, such as parks, recreation, mobility, environment, water quality, public safety, and public health.
- A revitalized Lower LA River provides communities of the Southeast region an opportunity to improve quality of life and address challenging, long-standing issues.
 - Multiple studies show that communities with natural spaces and active transportation networks have significantly reduced health risks related to cancer, asthma and obesity. Southeast communities are disproportionately burdened with these risks in Southern California.
- A revitalized Lower LA River also provides community and economic development opportunities, including but not limited to:
 - Parks, multi-use trails, and open spaces
 - Habitat restoration
 - Transportation: bikeways, walkways, and street improvements

- Economic and business development, including jobs
- Environmental and public health improvements
- Public safety enhancements
- Tourism
- A key focus of the LLARRP is to pursue community and river revitalization for the benefit of existing community members and local economies. A significant challenge is to minimize the displacement of community members—particularly those of low socioeconomic status—due to increased property values and rents to the extent possible.
 - The technical planning and community engagement processes will explore potential solutions and practices that have proven or promising results from similar communities nationwide.
- Community engagement for the LLARRP is focused on providing all community members with multiple opportunities and ways to be informed and involved in revitalizing the Lower LA River.
 - The Working Group is providing oversight and hands-on support in conducting engagement activities. Local non-governmental organizations, advocates and community organizations are providing leadership and support in these activities.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PHASES AND ACTIVITIES

This section outlines the community engagement activities associated with each planning phase. As explained in the Community Engagement Goals section, the approach utilizes multiple engagement activities, leverage the Working Group’s networks, coordinate input and output with the technical process, document the process, and promote long-term public awareness. Importantly, the approach will endeavor to involve community members of all backgrounds and interests, including those who are primarily/only Spanish-speaking community members by providing bilingual communication and involvement materials. Additional language needs will be accommodated as requested throughout the process.

PHASE I: VISION/GOALS/ISSUES/OPPORTUNITIES

May 2016 – December 2016

Phase Goal: Initiate the planning process through formation of the Working Group, the LLARRP planning framework and the Community Engagement Plan

Activities: The initial monthly **Working Group meetings** (which are open to the public) will focus on its organizing framework and structuring the planning framework. Meeting locations will rotate among public facilities throughout the river corridor.

Based on the planning framework, the five **Plan Element Committees** and the three **River Segment Committees** will initiate monthly meetings on alternating months. The committees will define their scope of analysis, issues and opportunities, and will provide reports back at each Working Group meeting.

The initial **project web portal** (www.lowerlariver.org) will launch, primarily to provide baseline project information and an information sharing (SharePoint) function for the project team and Working Group members.

A round of three **Community Kick-Off Events** will occur throughout the corridor to engage community members in the project, collecting input on how they use the river today, issues and challenges to using the river, and their visions for the future of the river.

A **community-driven branding process** will engage the community in defining a brand identity and name for the LLARRP under the guidance of the Community Engagement Committee. Initial community input will be collected at the Community Kick-Off Events.

Phase I

Timeline: Working Group and Committees' Meetings: monthly
Project Web Portal Launch: November 2016
Community Kick-Off Events: November – December 2016
Community Branding Launch: November 2016

Deliverables: Working Group and Committees' Meetings:

- Agendas
- Slideshows
- Organizing Framework
- Summary reports

Project Web Portal:

- Project information
- Sharepoint system
- Events calendar
- Comment form

Community Kick-Off Events:

- Interactive mapping
- Comment cards
- Wallgraphics with Comment Themes
- Summary Report

Community Branding:

- Comment cards (at community kick-off events)

PHASE II.1: CONCEPT PLAN DEVELOPMENT--OPPORTUNITIES

January 2017 – April 2017

Phase Goal: Educate the community on the project purpose, and facilitate input on priority opportunities for revitalizing the Lower LA River

Activities: The **Working Group, Plan Element Committees, and River Segment Committees** will continue to meet monthly. Public comment opportunities are available at Working Group meetings. Meetings will focus on identifying priority opportunities related to the plan elements and locations on the river corridor.

Outreach Toolkit #1 will provide outreach team members with educational and input materials to collect public input on potential and priority opportunities on the Lower LA River. Materials may include fact sheets, presentation slides, maps with project information, and input forms. These materials will integrate a newly completed **Community Brand**. The Community Engagement Committee will provide guidance to development of the brand and toolkit. The toolkit will be utilized with the following activities:

Community Presentations will occur to elected officials, community and neighborhood organizations, and interested recreational users to provide an overview of the process, status update, and information on how to stay involved. Importantly, these presentations should focus on communities with limited to no involvement in the process thus far. Project team members and/or Working Group members will jointly conduct either brief presentations as part of public comment periods at formal meetings, or as a pre-arranged agenda item.

River and Trail Tours will be conducted by project team members, Working Group members, and/or community partner organizations to bring the public to the river. The tours will educate about the river and potential opportunities, and will also collect participants' input about their priorities. Tours will be conducted via walking, bicycle, and equestrian modes.

Pop-Up Events may include small side-walk or park-based engagement, a booth at a farmer's market, and the like. The Community Engagement Committee will develop a potential list of locations and community

events sponsored by other groups that may include a LLARRP activity/booth delivered by project team members, Working Group members, and/or community partner organizations.

The **project website** may be expanded to include additional features and emerging project information for the public.

A **quarterly newsletter** will be developed and distributed electronically to the project's database and potentially the sponsoring agencies' networks. The information will include latest developments and upcoming public events.

An **online questionnaire** using interactive, map-based questions will be deployed throughout the community to collect input on potential and priorities opportunities on the river.

A series of three **Community Workshops** will occur throughout the corridor and will present the latest policies, programs and projects emerging from the process. Public input will focus on additional items, as well as public priorities.

Phase II.1

Timeline:

Working Group and Committees' Meetings: monthly
Community Branding: January – February 2017
Outreach Toolkit #1: January 2017
Community Presentations: February – April 2017
River and Trail Tours: March – April 2017
Pop-Up Events: February – April 2017
Project Website updates: monthly, or as needed
Quarterly Newsletter, March 2017
Online Questionnaire #1: February – March 2017
Community Workshops: April 2017

Deliverables: Working Group and Committees' Meetings:

- Agendas
- Slideshows
- Organizing Framework
- Summary reports

Community Branding:

- Completed graphic identity
- Usage guidelines

Outreach Toolkit #1:

- Project information/fact sheet

- Input forms
- Project map: potential opportunities
- Speaking points
- Slideshow
- Community brand integration
- Bilingual

Community Presentations:

- As scheduled with local organizations

River and Trail Tours

- Outreach and notices through community partners
- As scheduled with community partners

Pop-Up Events

- List of potential events, prioritized
- As scheduled with community partners

Project Website updates

- Events and calendar listings
- Expanded content and input features (TBD)

Quarterly Newsletter

- Latest developments
- Events and calendar listings

Online Questionnaire #1

- Mapped data and questions set
- Summary of results

Community Workshops

- Public notices: materials and distribution
- Agendas
- Slideshow/display material
- Interactive input materials
- Bilingual materials, and simultaneous translation
- Summary reports

PHASE II.2: CONCEPT PLAN DEVELOPMENT--PROPOSALS

May 2017 – July 2017

Phase Goal: Facilitate input on specific proposals for revitalizing the Lower LA River

Activities: The **Working Group, Plan Element Committees, and River Segment Committees** will continue to meet monthly. Public comment opportunities are available at Working Group meetings. Meetings will focus on specific proposals for policies, programs and projects that may be included in the LLARRP

Outreach Toolkit #2 will provide outreach team members with educational and input materials to collect public input on priority policies, programs and projects. Materials may include fact sheets, presentation slides, maps with project information, and input forms. The Community Engagement Committee will provide guidance to development of the brand and toolkit. The toolkit will be utilized with the following activities:

Youth Art Events will focus on engaging community youth with limited access to parks, open space and trails along the river corridor. Youth will review proposed projects for the corridor, and provide comments through verbal and visual art input, as facilitated by project team members, Working Group members, and/or a community partner. Their input may inform future design elements and implementation in the months and years ahead.

River and Trail Tours will be conducted by project team members, Working Group members, and/or community partner organizations to bring the public to specific locations related to proposed policies, programs and projects. The tours will also collect participants' input about their priorities. Tours will be conducted via walking, bicycle, and equestrian modes.

Pop-Up Events may include small side-walk or park-based engagement, a booth at a farmer's market, and the like. The Community Engagement Committee will develop a potential list of locations and community events that may include a LLARRP pop-up event delivered by project team members, Working Group members, and/or community partner organizations.

The **project website** may be expanded to include additional features and emerging project information for the public.

A **quarterly newsletter** will be developed and distributed electronically to the project's database and potentially the sponsoring agencies' networks. The information will include latest developments and upcoming public events.

Online Questionnaire #2 will use interactive, map-based questions to review and collect input on the proposed policies, programs and projects for the river.

Phase II.2

Timeline: Working Group and Committees' Meetings: monthly

Outreach Toolkit #2: June 2017
Youth Art Events: July 2017
River and Trail Tours: June – July 2017
Pop-Up Events: July 2017
Project Website updates: monthly, or as needed
Quarterly Newsletter, June 2017
Online Questionnaire #2: June – July 2017

Deliverables: Working Group and Committees' Meetings

- Agendas
- Slideshows
- Organizing Framework
- Summary reports

Outreach Toolkit #2

- Project information/fact sheet
- Input forms
- Project map: potential opportunities
- Speaking points
- Slideshow
- Community brand integration

Youth Art Events

- Outreach to local youth
- Art elements reflecting youth input on priorities for the river
- As scheduled with local organizations

River and Trail Tours

- Outreach and notices through community partners
- As scheduled with community partners

Quarterly Newsletter

- Latest developments
- Events and calendar listings

Pop-Up Events

- List of potential events, prioritized
- As scheduled with community partners

Project Website updates

- Events and calendar listings
- Expanded content and input features (TBD)

Online Questionnaire #2

- Mapped data and questions set
- Summary of results

PHASE III: DRAFT AND FINAL PLAN

August 2017 – November 2017

Phase Goal: Provide public review opportunities and collect public input on the Draft and Final LLARRP

Activities: The **Working Group** will continue to meet monthly and allow for public comment as part of their agendas. Meetings will focus on final input and revisions to the Draft and Final Draft LLARRP.

A series of three **Community Meetings** to review the Draft LLARRP will provide a public forum for community members to learn about the plan, ask questions, and provide feedback.

Community Presentations will occur to elected officials, community and neighborhood organizations to provide a brief overview of the Draft LLARRP. Project team members and/or Working Group members will jointly conduct either brief presentations as part of public comment periods at formal meetings, or as a pre-arranged agenda item.

The **project website** may be expanded to include additional features and emerging project information for the public.

A final **quarterly newsletter** will be developed and distributed electronically to the project's database and potentially the sponsoring agencies' networks. The information will include information on the Draft LLARRP and public comment opportunities.

Online Review of the Draft LLARRP will provide the community with a user-friendly interface with the document that will allow for simple submittal of comments.

Phase III

Timeline: Working Group Meetings: monthly
Community Meetings: Draft Plan Review: August – September 2017
Community Presentations: September – November 2017
Online Review of the Draft LLARRP: August – November 2017
Quarterly Newsletter, August 2017
Project Website updates: monthly, or as needed

Deliverables: Working Group Meetings

- Agendas
- Slideshows

- Organizing Framework
 - Summary reports
- Community Meetings
- Public notices: materials and distribution
 - Agendas
 - Slideshow/display material
 - Interactive input materials
 - Bilingual materials, and simultaneous translation
 - Summary reports
- Community Presentations:
- Slideshow
 - Speaking points
 - As scheduled with local organizations
- Online Review of the Draft LLARRP
- Web-based interface and input form
 - Summary of input
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Latest developments
 - Events and calendar listings
- Project Website updates
- Events and calendar listings
 - Expanded content and input features (TBD)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS ROADMAP

The following page provides a visual representation of the Community Engagement Plan.

Lower LA River Revitalization Master Plan

Community Engagement Process Roadmap

REVISED: DECEMBER 2016

