



The River south of Willow Street



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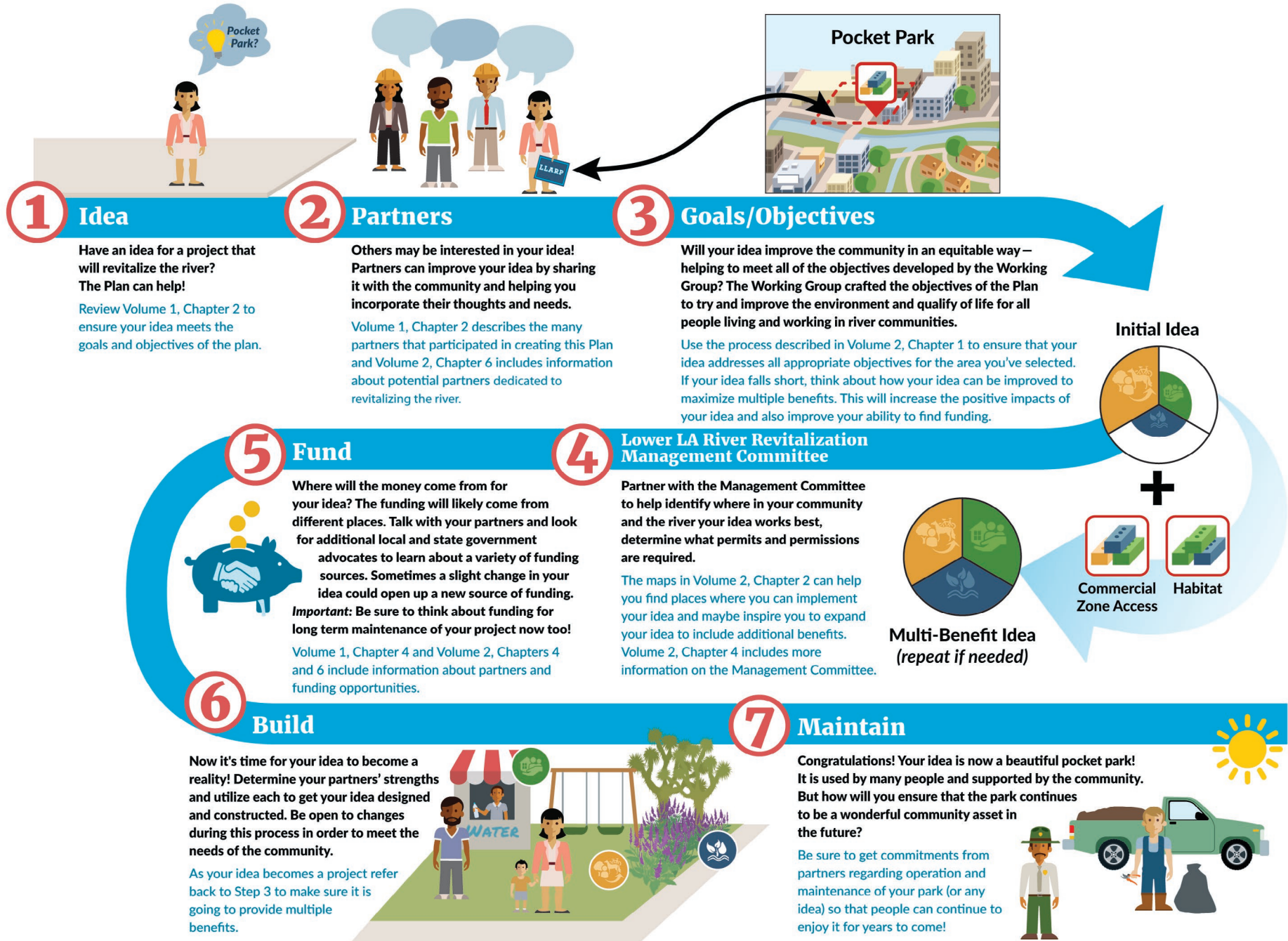
The Long View

Chapter 3 provides details about a few projects highlighted by the Working Group, however, there are many more project ideas included in this Plan (please see Volume 2, Chapter 2). Making these ideas a reality requires project advocates and partners to help others understand and support the project in the community. Such partnerships can be formed through the relationships fostered during the Plan development within the Working Group. These partnerships can help identify locations for the project, secure funding, and become advocates within local cities and agencies. Tools such as city general plans and capital improvement plans (CIP) can help identify locations for projects that may already have city support and funding secured.

Advocates can share information about water, environment, history of the river or the history of the people living next to the river will help them to see what role the river could play in their lives.

Project Partners can be other advocates, city or agency representatives, local organizations, neighborhood councils or homeowner associations.

Road Map for Advocating for a Project in Your LA River Community





Community Workshop at 21st to Hill Street Park, Long Beach

Successful Example of Community Advocacy and Partnership 21st to Hill Street Park

In Long Beach, a group of neighbors advocated for a park in their neighborhood. The site selected was known as 21st to Hill Street Park, near the LA River Bike Path and in the South Wrigley neighborhood. The neighbors organized around the existing park, discussed ways to revitalize the

park with their Council Member, garnered his support for the effort, and found funding through private industry and volunteer support. The park was funded by JetBlue, organized by their partner Kaboom, and installed by hundreds of volunteers during a one-day event. The process took a few

years, but now the residents have a great addition to the neighborhood. Projects of this size can be built based on the persistent advocacy of neighbors who collaborate with other organizations.

155
locations

for projects and
revitalization have
been identified as
part of the Plan



Working Group and Community members providing input during a meeting



Collecting input at community workshop



LA River Bike Path at Rosecrans Ave

Coordinated Planning and Implementation

Numerous river revitalization and corridor plans reports, and documents preceded this Plan (Volume 2, Chapter 5). These efforts were consulted for lessons learned and recommended next steps. Likewise, this Plan should be consulted during future land use, river restoration, open space, infrastructure and transportation planning efforts to ensure that the revitalization opportunities identified in this Plan are incorporated into other public and private investments along the river.

For example, many cities within the river corridor are in the process of updating their general plans, which are documents used to define how land can be used and developed. Project advocates and partners should be involved and engaged in this process to ensure projects ideas are included in the city's future land use plans. Community and project advocates may shed light on issues and opportunities that city planners may overlook. Partnership and advocacy groups should engage during this level of the planning process to push forward their projects or ideas.

Coordinating planning efforts can leverage funding sources, maximize implementation strategies, and share information through the networks used to create these plans. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Works intends to update the LA River Master Plan within a few years. This update will include all 51 miles of the river and provide uniform standards based on

The LLARRP will be incorporated into the LA River Master Plan (LARMP) Update. In addition, the LARMP Update Steering Committee will include representatives from the Lower River.

previous planning efforts. It is also important to ensure that projects are consistent with existing standards such as the wayfinding guidance found in the County of L.A. Trail Signage Handbook. At the watershed scale, this planning effort provides the opportunity to address systemic issues by leveraging nature-based solutions to improve the quality of the entire river.

Many cities also develop an capital improvement plan, which details the city's budget for capital improvement projects plan such as including where the funding comes from, and where the funding goes. Project partners can secure city funds by identifying advocates within the city. Project partners may be able to secure city funds by identifying advocates within the city and incorporating revitalization benefits into existing CIP projects. Many organizations and partners seek support from neighborhood groups or city council members, who can lobby on behalf of the project within the city for funding and inclusion as a capital improvement project. City and agency board meetings are opportunities for neighborhood and community advocates to promote their project and garner support of city officials.

Successful Example of Coordinated Planning

Compton Creek Natural Park

The Compton Creek Natural Park is an example of coordinated planning and a strong advocacy partnership between the Compton Unified School District, Los Angeles Conservation Corps and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority. These public interest agencies were able to combine their strengths to provide the public a large amount of parkland for recreation, education and relaxation.

Compton Creek Natural Park adds much needed park space to park-poor Compton. The Nature Park was built on 4.2 acres of the Washington Elementary School campus, and is the first large endeavor to convert the area next to highly urbanized and degraded Compton Creek into a linear public park destination, making the vision of the Compton Creek Garden Master Plan a reality.

Executed in three phases, components of the park include native plants and shade trees, interpretive signs, walking trails with fitness equipment, a multi-use amphitheater for school events and ceremonies, an underground cistern to hold rainwater for irrigation, an outdoor classroom at the creek overlook, restroom, a skate spot, community gardens, and a water play feature.



Compton Creek Natural Park

Photo by Los Angeles Conservation Corps



Compton Creek Natural Park

Photo by Los Angeles Conservation Corps

This park is an example of coordinated planning, leveraging the working group network, garnering agency support and funding, and implementing portions of the Compton Creek Garden Master Plan, making vision a reality.



Current Riverfront near Rio Hondo Confluence

Successful Example of Coordinated Planning **South Gate Riverfront Enhancement Plan**

The City of South Gate recently updated its general plan to include a Riverfront Enhancement Plan for both the Rio Hondo and LA River. When executed, it will address a variety of public improvements including enhancing access, and

addressing the design of buildings to support the revitalization of the riverfront. As part of this project, the City of South Gate evaluated the land at the confluence to determine an appropriate use for the area that results in a regional destination

or a significant visual landmark. The City of South Gate was an active and engaged member of the Working Group and the Rio Hondo Confluence is a signature concept included as part of this Plan.

Continued Advocacy and Outreach

Through advocacy, community partnerships, and Working Group coalitions, the watershed education program was developed as a resource increase community recognition of the value of the river, reconnect the communities to the river, and explore the importance of protecting the river's resources. This program will help build the support needed to continue to take ideas presented in this Plan and make them happen along the river.

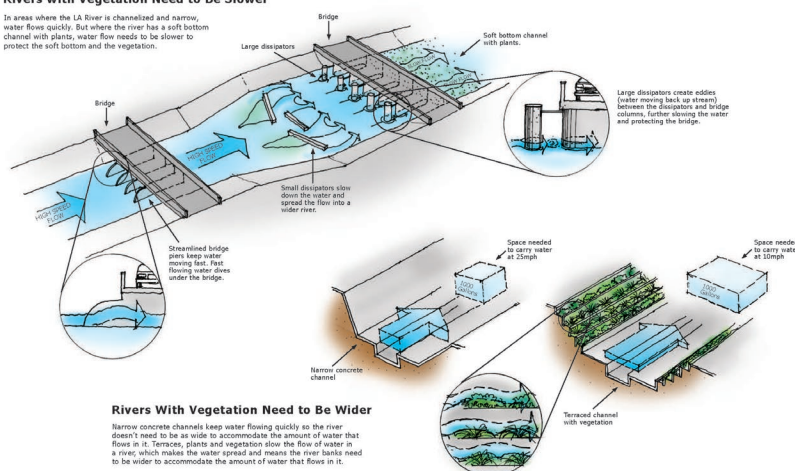


Community outreach and education at the Downey Street Faire

The AB 530 requires that the Plan include the development of watershed education programs. The full watershed education programs are included in the Watershed Education Plan.

Rivers with Vegetation Need to Be Slower

In areas where the LA River is channelized and narrow, water flows quickly. But where the river has a soft bottom channel with plants, water flow needs to be slower to protect the soft bottom and the vegetation.

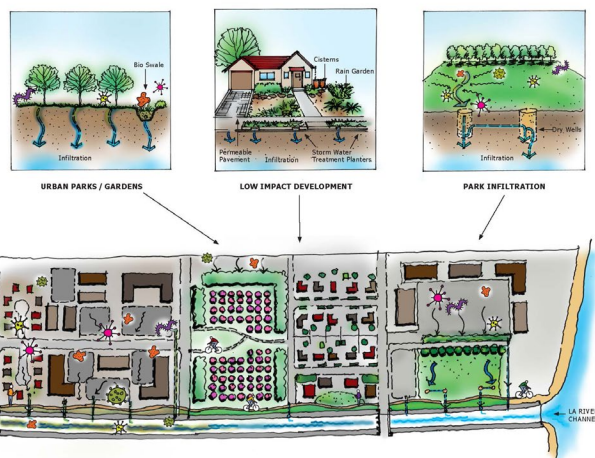


Rivers With Vegetation Need to Be Wider

Narrow concrete channels keep water flowing quickly so the river doesn't need to be as wide to accommodate the amount of water that flows in it. Terraces, plants and vegetation slow the flow of water in a river, which makes the water spread and means the river banks need to be wider to accommodate the amount of water that flows in it.

Cleaning Runoff Before it Flows to the River

When it rains or we overwater our yards and wash our cars, water runs down our streets and picks up all the stuff we leave behind, like trash, animal waste and motor oil. That water flows right into the river and the ocean. But we can naturally cleanse that water before it reaches the river, using native plants and soils that soak up pollutants. Infiltration tanks underneath parks, urban orchards that provide open space and trees, bioswales along streets, and even small rain gardens and cisterns at our homes and businesses—every drop cleaned is a win for the river!



The Watershed Education Plan is designed to educate and engage the communities, while reconnecting them to one another and to the river itself.

Watershed Education and Advocacy

The AB 530 requires that a watershed education program (Watershed Education Program) be developed as part of the Plan. The watershed education program seeks to increase community recognition of the value of the river, reconnect the communities to the river, and explore the importance of protecting the river's resources. It builds off of the existing educational resources of the Working Group and other organizations that support the river and identifies gaps that need to be filled in order to strengthen engagement through watershed education. The

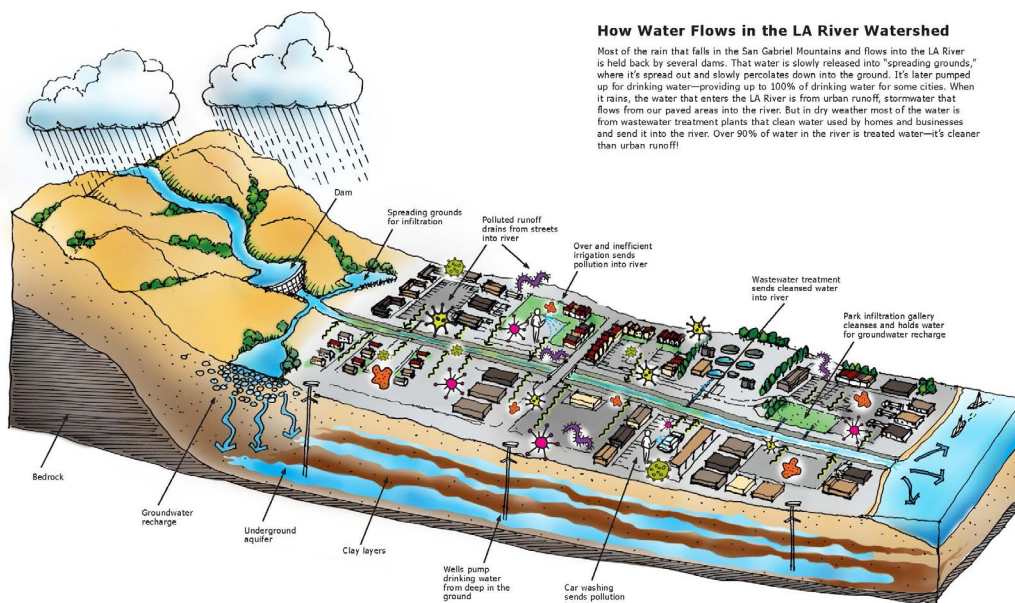
watershed education program explores key plan element topics, such as hydrology and hydraulics, habitat, flood control, people and cultures surrounding the River, wellness and health, recreation, land use, and essentially, connecting people to the river.

Three overarching themes identified in the development of the Program were:

1. Interconnectedness of the people, the culture, the river, and the watershed
2. Nontraditional education pathways and place-based learning, engaging a wide audience
3. Multiple benefit thinking, leveraging education and connectedness

How Water Flows in the LA River Watershed

Most of the rain that falls in the San Gabriel Mountains and flows into the LA River is held back by several dams. That water is slowly released into "spreading grounds," where it's spread out and slowly percolates down into the ground. It's later pumped up for drinking water—providing up to 100% of drinking water for some cities. When it rains, the water that enters the LA River is from urban runoff, stormwater that flows from our paved areas into the river. But in dry weather most of the water is from wastewater treatment plants that clean water used by homes and businesses and send it into the river. Over 90% of water in the river is treated water—it's cleaner than urban runoff!



The watershed education program cross-references the list of educational resources for the topics explored based on audience and age, and presents recommendations for next steps to further watershed, river, and community education. These resources promote continued outreach and advocacy, supply tools for greater education, and provide a platform for community members to stay involved with the Plan, the river, and the vision.

Ultimately, the watershed education program identifies way to invest in environmental and water education and highlights the personal connections between everyday activities—such as driving a car, watering a lawn, picking up pet waste—and watershed health and river quality.



Implementation Next Steps

Once the Plan is complete, focus will shift to establishing the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG), to help guide the river revitalization efforts. As a governance structure, the IAG would be central to discussions on the prioritization, funding, and implementation of projects. The anticipated the next steps for continued revitalization include:

- Establish the IAG as the governance body that provides advice and discussion on future plans for revitalization of the Lower Los Angeles River.
- Prioritize the Plan's 155 projects evaluation prior to implementation; adding new projects to the list as projects are implemented. Projects will be implemented based on readiness, costs and available funding, need for agency cooperation/cost sharing, and political will.
- Develop a list of action items for each prioritized projects, tying each to the responsible organizations such as cities, County, State/Federal, and/or non-governmental organizations that could act as lead organizations and/or implementation partners.
- Develop a schedule for future project and program implementation.
- Identify funding sources and programs associated with the projects and the agency and organizations that would lead funding efforts. While funding is outside of the IAG control, the IAG will be available to provide guidance and assist with the effort.
- Consider the opportunity to form a self-sustaining Management District that has authority for continued river revitalization and project implementation while seeking funding.

Revitalization does not only happen on the large, splashy, regional scale, but can also occur on the small, community, park, or neighborhood block scale. Revitalization can happen slowly, with small improvements such as a bench or shade structure, an improved park space, or a more well-lit and well-marked access point to a multi-use path. This Plan is a guide for how revitalization can be advocated for by individual residents, communities, nonprofit organizations, or government agencies. Through continued advocacy and partnerships, revitalization can go beyond the levees of the river and into the communities and neighborhoods surrounding it to improve people's lives now and in the future.



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Chapter 1

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Chapter 3

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Lower Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan

