

ED. P. REYES

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Founder and Former Chairman of AD HOC LA River Committee

The L.A. River



PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

COMMUNITY HISTORY

Understand pulse of community and social economic conditions

- Types of pressures building in communities along the river
 - Lack of jobs
 - Gang violence
 - Drug addiction
 - Single parent households
 - Drop out rate
 - Non English language spoken at home
- Incidents of displacement caused by government decisions create community distrust/detachment from civic process
 - Rejecting proposed maintenance yards (Taylor Yard)
 - Homes removed for freeways scarring communities.
 - Local undesirable land uses (Lulus) placed in “undesirable neighborhoods” as perceived by leaders in the 1940’s and 1950’s who did not live in negatively impacted communities



COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Promote neighborhood ownership by providing a new set of lenses to view their landscape from a different perspective , “bird’s eye view”

- Create analytical tools to stimulate collaboration through workshops, bilingual literature, inviting leadership of mainstream and non-traditional stake holders
- Architects, engineers promoted scenarios in workshops by starting with the question;
“What if access was created to the river by building a roadway across the abandoned railyard? What if a bike path could be built along the river edge? Focus on circulation, recreation, business, and ecosystems
- Do not avoid “creative tension”, now is the time to voice concerns
 - Hillside property owners vs. “flat land” renters
 - Transit dependent vs. automobile dependent vs. bicyclists
- Diverse input emerges organically as answers vary, given the stakeholders day to day reality
- Scenarios emerge to stage the opportunity sites, identify where the planning police powers of the City, County and State can work together to establish cooperation and coordination

COMMUNITY PROCESS

Confidence from stakeholders

- Churches
- Soccer leagues
- Schools
- Senior Centers
- High School Conference

How is diversity achieved in the process?

- Input from adult school's teaching English as a second language
- Participation from leaders involved in gang intervention programs



COMMUNITY RIVER TOURS/ MEETINGS

- Attended by community, interested parties, agency representatives, and design team members
- Provided on-site forum for discussions regarding key issues
- Helped to develop working relationships among all parties

Realization of Planning efforts requires Collaboration and Commitment from Neighborhoods and Agencies



- Presentation of Design Concepts
- Forum for the Community to voice concerns



Volunteer Neighborhood Oversight Committee (VNOC)

- Members representing key local interests; involved from the beginning
- Regular meetings held throughout the design process

MAKING THE RIVER INCLUSIVE

Emergence of grass roots input from people who live in the communities at times complimented the goals of river advocates, development sector and preservationists, other instances there was incompatibility

Ad Hoc LA River committee officially served as the funnel to begin building a formal social infrastructure, financial structure for accountability, and multijurisdictional collaboration. Elected officials from each jurisdiction coordinated resources, legislative strategy, and community development concerns



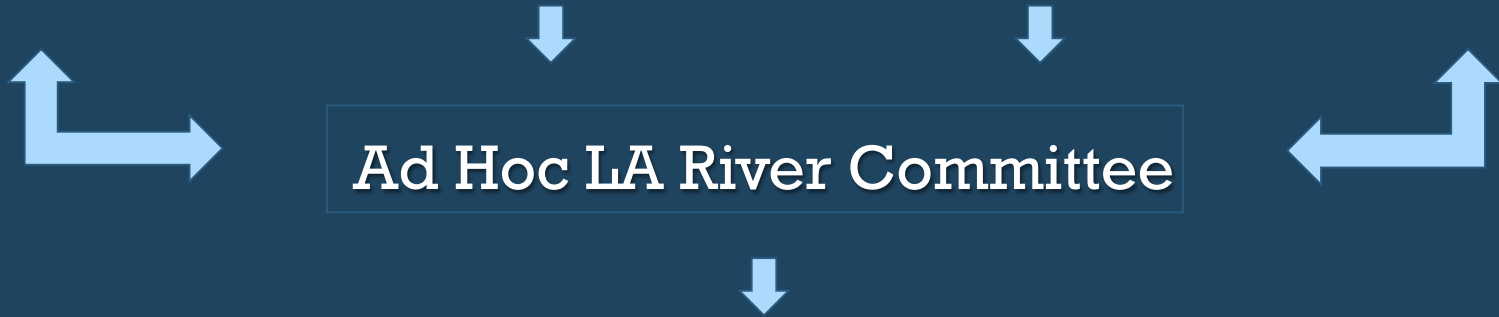
AD HOC LA RIVER COMMITTEE

Neighborhood Interests

Nonprofits

Corporations

Government
City of LA



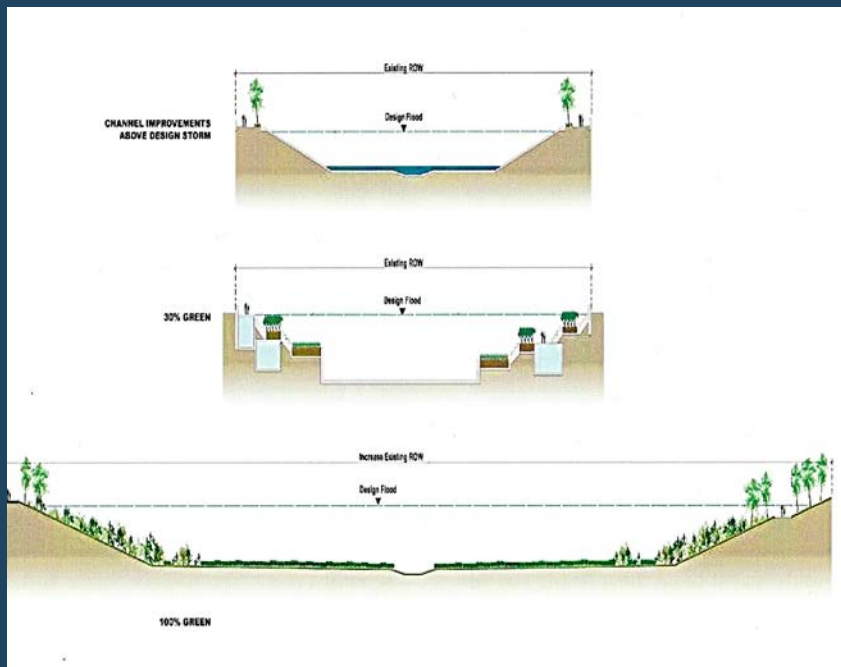
Ad Hoc LA River Committee

FISCAL, LANDUSE, AND POLICY ANALYSIS

WATERSHED CONTEXT



“MORE GREEN” REQUIRES MORE CAPACITY



- Create a continuous functional riparian corridor that provides habitat for birds, mammals, and fish within the channel bottom
- Connect this corridor to other significant habitat and migration routes along the tributaries and into the mountains
- Improve water quality and provide fish passages, ladders, and riffle pools that support desirable fish species, including steelhead trout if feasible
- Bio-engineer the River's edge where feasible to create wildlife habitat



FEDERAL UMBRELLA

LA River Watershed Urban Waters
Federal Partnership Pilot Project
led by US EPA

- Lisa Jackson (EPA Admin.)
- Ken Salazar (U.S. Dept. of Interior)
- Nancy Sutley (White House Council on Environmental Quality)
- Harris Shermann (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture)
- Joe Ellen Darcy (U.S. Secretary for the Army)



AGENCIES/ INTERESTED PARTIES

- Department of Recreation and Parks, City of Los Angeles
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
- Department of Transportation, City of Los Angeles
- Valley District Councilman's Office
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District
- National Parks Service – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
- Friends of the Los Angeles River
- North East Trees
- Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- State Coastal Conservancy
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Develop professional relationships to establish a clear vision of the project goals



This plan is supported by:

Honorable Jackie Goldberg, California State Assemblymember
Honorable Gloria Molina, Supervisor, County of Los Angeles
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Center for Law in the Public Interest
Central City Association
Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles
Environmental Defense
Friends of the Los Angeles River
Latino Urban Forum
Livable Places
Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition
The Los Angeles & San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council

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