



# Annual Impact Report 2018

525 South Hewitt Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
323.221.7800





# River LA

## OUR VISION

The Los Angeles River is at the heart of a healthy, vibrant and resilient region.

## OUR MISSION

We integrate design and infrastructure to bring people, water and nature together along all 51 miles of the Los Angeles River.

Any questions or partnership inquiries?

525 S. Hewitt St.

Los Angeles, CA 90013

323-221-7800

[info@riverla.org](mailto:info@riverla.org)



# From our Board Chair

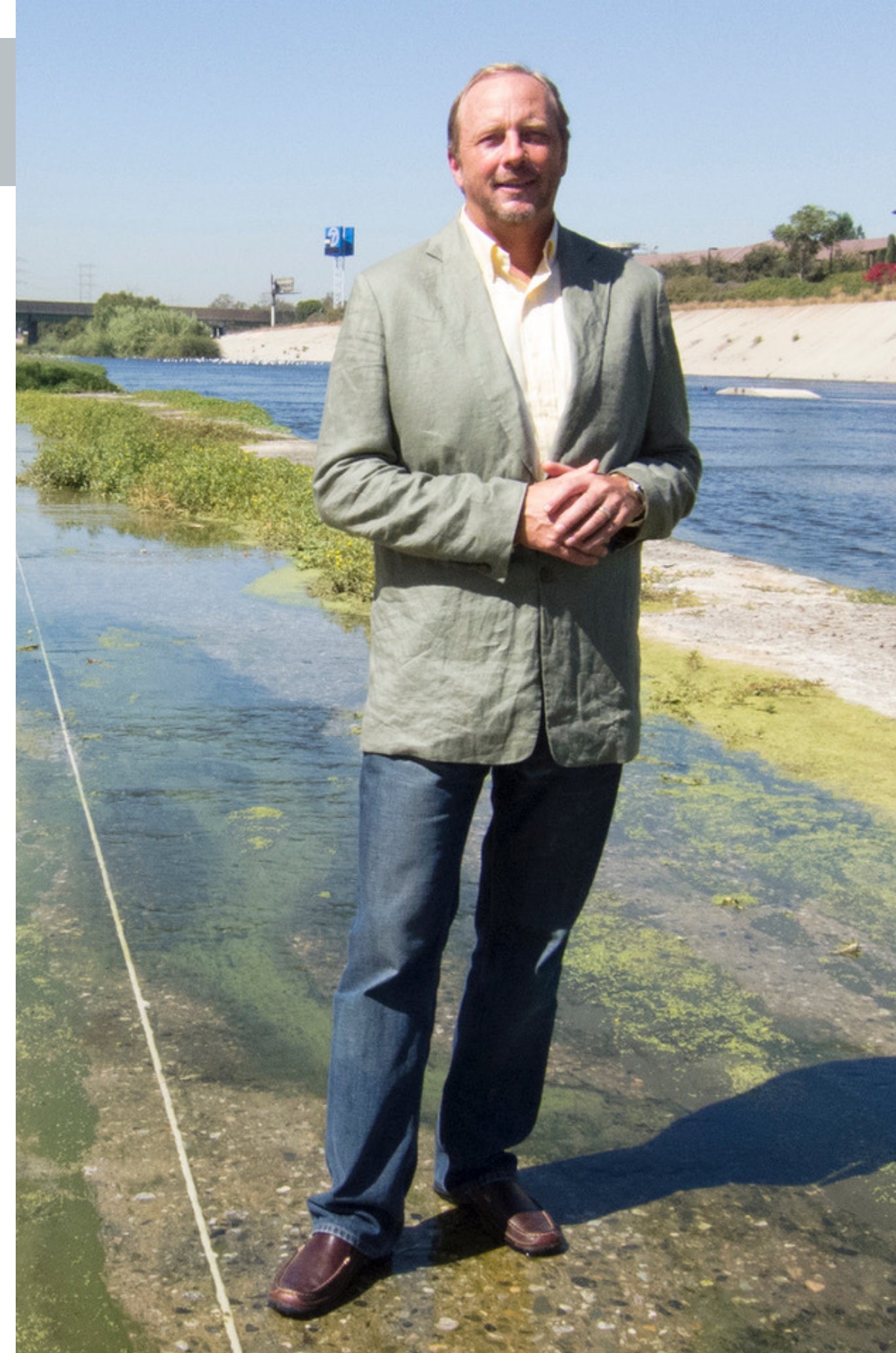
I had been searching for a project that would have a beneficial impact on the city I call home and love dearly. It is hard to believe that it has been more than ten years since I found that inspirational project that is the reimagination of the Los Angeles River. Looking back, I think it is safe to say at that moment in time I would not have thought that I would soon become a founding Board member for a transformative project that would have a positive impact on generations of Angelenos to come.

When I think about all we have achieved during our time together— I am encouraged, proud and motivated to keep moving forward. It is this collective momentum and the power of our voices that will keep pushing us to the next level of transformational change. I am inspired by your commitment to be a part of this journey.

To join the conversation, to introduce people new and old to our mission, and to work together to reimagine a river that speaks to the hopes and dreams of communities across Los Angeles County. With collaboration, commitment and passion anything is possible. I look forward to continuing to work together to unlock the full potential of our river.

**Harry Chandler**

River LA Board Chair



*North Atwater Park*



# From our Founding Executive Director

I could not be more grateful to have served as the founding Executive Director and President of River LA. We have led groundbreaking collaborations to move the vision and transformation of the LA River forward and I am proud of what we have accomplished, particularly with the creative partnerships we have made across the public, private, and philanthropic sectors. People invest in what they love. We want LA to love and invest in the LA River.

Last year, our Board Chair and I completed a national search to find an executive who could run River LA and build broader public support. We successfully recruited Angela Barranco, an experienced leader and conservation biologist by training whose passion is creating change and getting things done. It is a privilege to pass on the baton of leadership to Angela knowing the organization is in great hands. My entrepreneurial and civic spirit is driving me towards new pursuits but I will always love the river and proudly continue at River LA as Founding Executive Director and Senior Advisor. I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to contribute to the LA River as an essential natural and cultural resource for the region, and a global model of our region's resiliency. Thank you, sincerely, for your continued support.

**Omar Brownson**

Founding Executive Director  
Incoming Senior Advisor, January 2019







North Atwater Park

# Thanks from our Incoming CEO

Thank you so much for your continued support of River LA's mission to transform and connect the 51 miles of the LA River for all Angelenos. By bringing water, people, and nature together, River LA works with every partner, contributor, and friend to help us move this great mission forward. We appreciate everything you do!

Stay in touch with us at [RiverLA.org](http://RiverLA.org) and we'll see you on the river!

Muchas gracias por su apoyo continuo a la misión de River LA para transformar y conectar las 51 millas del Río L.A. para todos los Angelinos. Al juntar el agua, la comunidad y la naturaleza, River LA trabaja con cada socio, colaborador y amigo del río para ayudarnos a avanzar esta gran misión. Apreciamos todo lo que haces!

¡Mantente en contacto con nosotros en [RiverLA.org](http://RiverLA.org) y nos vemos en el río!



**Angela Barranco**

Incoming Chief Executive Officer



# Updates from the River

The revitalization efforts of the Los Angeles River have gained tremendous momentum this year thanks to our many community and strategic partners along the 51 miles.



*Mile 51 of the Los Angeles River  
Canoga Park High School  
Canoga Park, CA*



# Updates from the River

## NORTH ATWATER CROSSING

Earlier this year, River LA joined Mayor Eric Garcetti and many of our other key partners to break ground on the new North Atwater Multimodal bridge. At the event, Mayor Garcetti said, “The L.A. River is an extraordinary treasure with limitless potential for the communities that surround it. This bridge will give Angelenos better access to green space — creating a destination for people across Los Angeles to disconnect from city life and enjoy nature.”

River LA took the lead in catalyzing the initial funding by securing a large philanthropic donation that provided the foundation for eventual permitting and construction. For more information on this project, click [HERE](#).



Groundbreaking for the Atwater Crossing Project



Projected rendering of the Atwater Multimodal Bridge



LA River Bike Path  
South Gate, CA



LA River Bike Path  
Long Beach, CA

## LOS ANGELES RIVER PATH PROJECT

The Los Angeles River Path Project will design and construct a bike path along an eight-mile stretch of the Los Angeles River from Elysian Valley through Downtown Los Angeles to the City of Vernon, closing the longest remaining continuous gap in the Los Angeles River Bike Path.

When complete, this facility will provide a seamless 32-mile grade-separated regional corridor for walking and bicycling through the heart of Los Angeles County, connecting Long Beach to the San Fernando Valley along the River. The project is allocated \$365 million in funding through Measure M and may begin construction as early as 2023. To share your vision and voice take Metro’s community survey [HERE](#).



# Updates from the River

## PLANNING AND POLICY

### *PROPOSITION 68*

In June 2018, California voters approved a statewide parks and water measure authorizing \$4 billion in general obligation bonds for state and local parks, environmental protection and restoration projects, water infrastructure projects, and flood protection projects. River LA advocated for this proposition through online media and email communications. Funds will be used to build new parks, upgrade existing parks, and provide water resiliency, meaning facilities to capture and clean water. Of this \$4 billion, \$75 million is earmarked for improvements to the Los Angeles River. To learn more about Proposition 68, read [HERE](#).

### *MEASURE W*

During the midterm elections in November 2018, voters approved Measure W for the Safe, Clean Water Program to protect public health and improve Los Angeles County's local water supply by establishing a parcel tax of 2.5¢ per square foot of impermeable area raising approximately \$300 million annually. Each year, over 90 billion gallons of water travel down the Los Angeles River. River LA also advocated heavily for this measure through online communications. This initiative will enable Los Angeles County to capture, clean, and store some of the water lost each year and ensure safer, greener, open space for everyone in Los Angeles County. To learn more read [HERE](#).







Los Angeles County LA River Master Plan  
Community Meeting #2 in Cudahy

# Updates from the River

## PLANNING AND POLICY

### *LOS ANGELES COUNTY LOS ANGELES RIVER MASTER PLAN UPDATE*

The County of Los Angeles hand-selected River LA along with a world-class team of consultants to help update the 1996 LA River Master Plan. The planning effort will synthesize more recent studies of the River and bringing a comprehensive vision to the transformation of all 51 miles of the LA River. River LA is leading the community engagement and outreach in partnership with other nonprofits, local leaders, and people living along the river.

### *THE LOWER LA RIVER IMPLEMENTATION ADVISORY GROUP*

The Lower LA River Implementation Advisory Group, which River LA served on, aimed to ensure that subsequently implemented projects are carried out in accordance with the Lower LA River Revitalization Plan and that stakeholders continue to have a voice in implementation.

### *THE UPPER LOS ANGELES RIVER & TRIBUTARIES WORKING GROUP*

The Upper Los Angeles River and Tributaries Working Group will develop a Revitalization Plan for the Upper Los Angeles River, the tributaries of the Pacoima Wash, Tujunga Wash, and Verdugo Wash, and any additional tributary waterways through watershed-based planning methods and community engagement. River LA will participate in the process.



# River LA in 2018

Our public programs and engagement grow stronger each year through community meetings, partnerships, digital outreach and activations alongside our river communities.



*Place settings at our  
8th Annual Urban Garden Party*

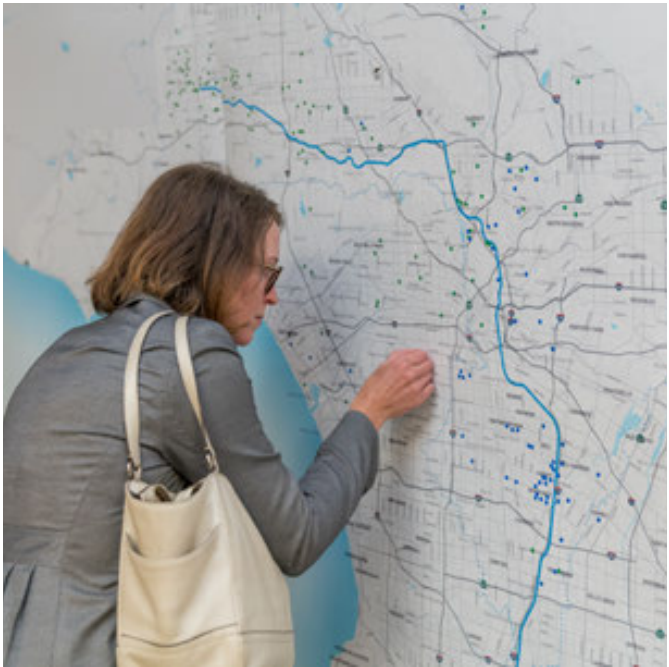


# River LA in 2018

## LOS ANGELES COUNTY LA RIVER MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Community Meeting #3  
Long Beach



Community Meeting #2  
Cudahy

During these meetings, community members have a unique chance to express their opinions about what the future of the LA River should look like. So far, an estimated 760 community members have participated in our meetings. In addition, 754 digital and in-person river surveys were completed. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that aspirations are recognized and included throughout the planning process.

In November, the LARMP held a Youth Summit in Downtown LA, where over 800 high-school students participated in a 6-track river-related curriculum. To stay up to date on the plan’s development and get involved at an upcoming meeting visit <http://larivermasterplan.org>.

River LA’s goal with the Los Angeles County LA River Master Plan is to objectively inform and engage the public at each step of the planning process. Our work provides a two-way communication loop between the general public, community organizations and the planning team. Launched in April 2018, the Los Angeles County LA River Master Plan Update is a County-led effort to address the current and future needs of more than one million people who rely on the iconic waterway for flood protection, recreation, transportation, open space, wildlife habitat and economic stimulus. The County’s Master Plan was last updated in 1996, and this update will build upon that version, as well as other Los Angeles River studies completed since then.

River LA is leading the coordination of community engagement and outreach for this LARMP update, along with other community organizations, to support the County in this effort, including Geosyntec, OLIN, and Gehry Partners. In 2018, we held 5 large-scale community meetings in different river-adjacent regions – Canoga Park, Cudahy, Long Beach, Los Feliz/Atwater Village, and Studio City/North Hollywood – with plans to hold 7 more in 2019.



Community Meeting #2 in Cudahy



LA River Youth Summit



# River LA in 2018

## A SEAT AT THE TABLE

A Seat at the Table is an ongoing campaign designed as an invitation to community members across the 51 miles to "join the conversation" about what the LA River means for communities today, what the river could be in the future, and what it will take to get there. Through the simple act of sharing meals near the LA River, incredible stories about the river are captured on film bringing the voices of Angelenos to a broader audience through targeted digital outreach. To date, River LA has hosted three of these events at the confluence of the Rio Hondo and the LA River in Southeast Los Angeles, in the Elysian Valley and at the headwaters of Canoga Park with partners CicLAvia & LA River Kayak Expeditions.



[CLICK](#) to view these videos on Youtube.



River LA's second A Seat at the Table event with CiclaVla in May featured as a part of the LA Times. #Foodbowl





# River LA in 2018

## RIVER LA, GAVIN NEWSOM, SUPERVISOR SOLIS, AND FRANK GEHRY ON THE RIVER

In August, River LA held a tour and briefing on the LA River with now Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom, LA County Supervisor Hilda Solis, and world-renowned Frank Gehry to discuss the state of the LA River. The meeting took place at the confluence of the river in South Gate, where River LA brought our guests together to understand how a reimagined river will impact the region, county, and state.

*From left to right: Supervisor Hilda Solis, Governor-Elect Gavin Newsom, Frank Gehry, and River LA Founding Executive Director Omar Brownson at the confluence of the river in Southgate*



# River LA in 2018

## PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIVATIONS



*Frogtown Artwalk  
léo Limõn and CD 13 Representative  
Hector Vega*



*Frogtown Artwalk  
Daniel Postaer, River LA Artist  
in Residence*



*Frogtown Artwalk along the LA River*

### FROGTOWN ARTWALK

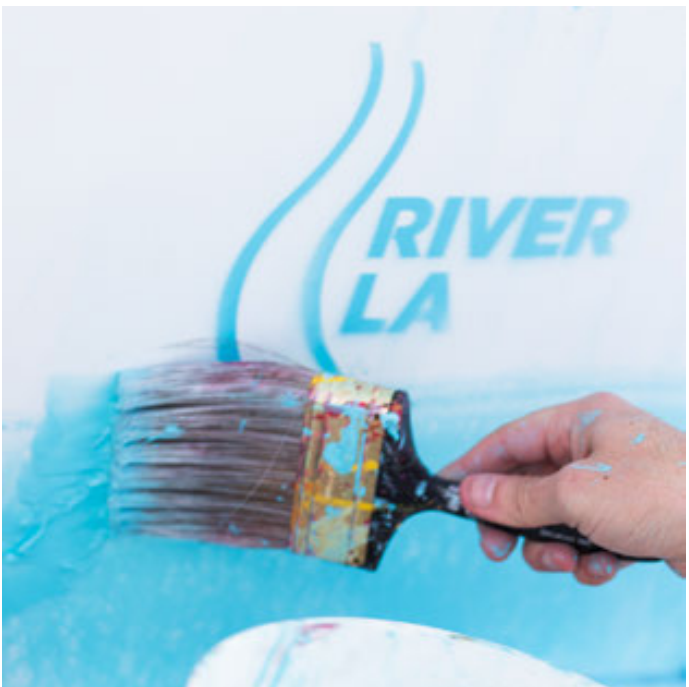
September 2018 - We were so excited to partner with both our artist in residence Daniel Postaer and our long-time friend léo Limõn for this year's Frogtown Artwalk, a community festival that stretches 2 miles along the LA River and engages artists, businesses and residents in a celebration of local artists and creativity flourishing in the neighborhood.

### COMPLEXCON

November 2018 - River LA Partnered with POW! WOW! and The Compound to produce a live interactive art piece to reach new audiences for the LA River. The mural was painted by Drew Merritt at ComplexCon in Long Beach.



*Artist Drew Merritt and his mural*



*River LA logo stenciled into the  
corner of the mural*



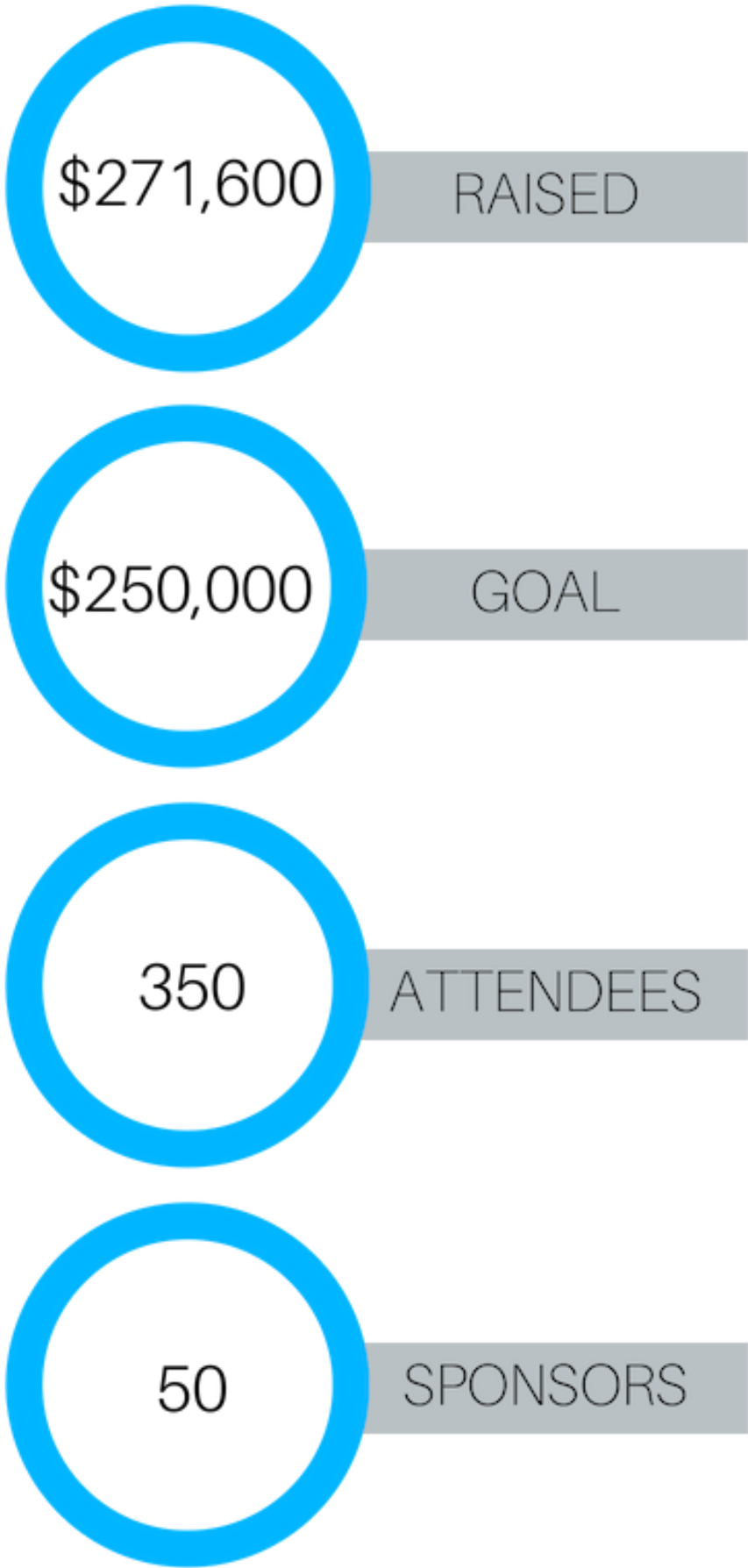
# River LA in 2018

## 8TH ANNUAL URBAN GARDEN PARTY

Our 8th Annual Urban Garden Party: *Join the Conversation* on October 7th was a huge success – we exceeded our fundraising goals! We'd like to thank this year's sponsors and guests who came out to celebrate with us for a beautiful evening. 350 attendees enjoyed the musical talent, art experiences and delicious cuisine from all over our city. We were delighted for the opportunity to reflect with our biggest supporters the work that's been accomplished, exciting changes happening in our organization's future, and to honor our Changing the Course of Los Angeles Honorees, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl and the law firm of Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP. Thank you for making the night such a success!



8th Annual Urban Garden Party at Apothèque in Chinatown





# River LA in 2018

## THANK YOU TO SOME OF OUR STRATEGIC PARTNERS AND PRO-BONO SERVICE PROVIDERS

72andSunny

City of Los Angeles, Bureau of Engineering

ComplexCon

County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Works

Dake Luna Consultants

Gehry Partners, LLP

Geosyntec Consultants

Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, LLP

OLIN

Outward Bound Adventures

Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP

POW! WOW! Long Beach

Rivers and Mountains Conservancy

Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy

and many more to come!



Gehry Partners, LLP



Gibson  
Dunn &  
Crutcher, LLP



OLIN





# Our Supporters

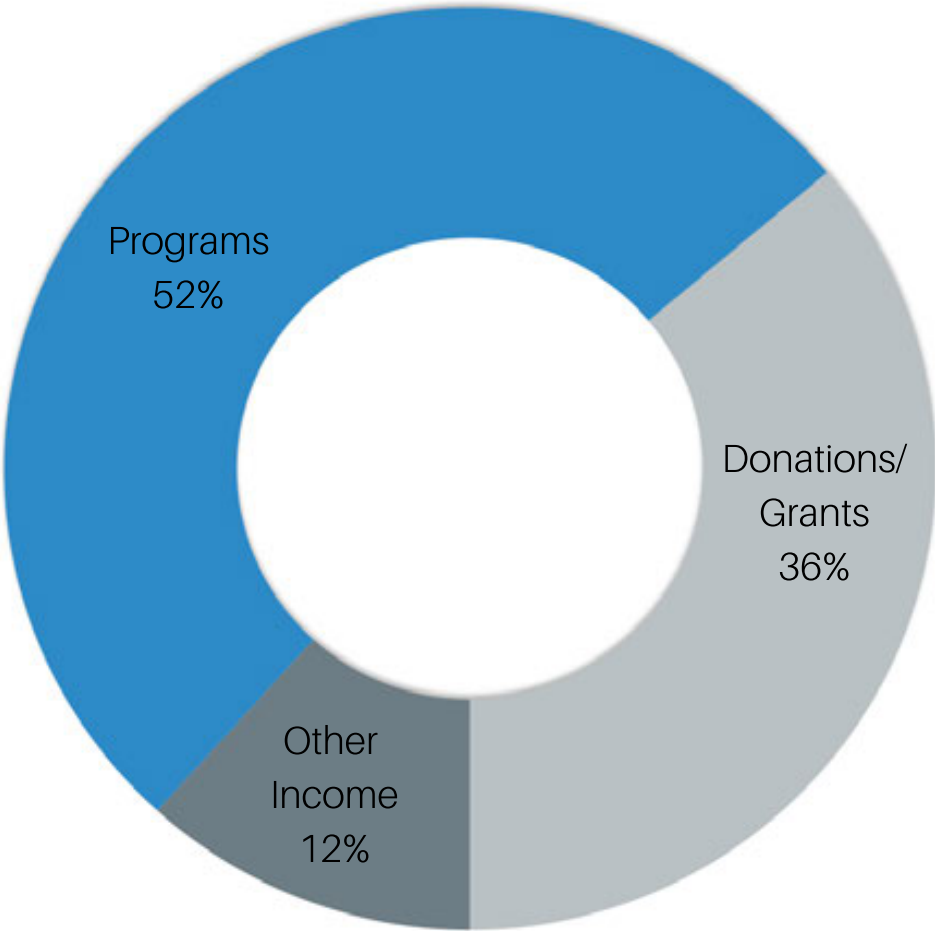
72andSunny	Harry Chandler	Kyndell Gaglio	Claudia Kahn	Margaret Myea	Mark Roybal	Lewis Weintraub
Achieving America Family Foundation	Judy Chang	Rebecca Galvez	Kaiser Permanente Southern California Region	Dee Dee Myers	Terry Rubinroit	Richard Weintraub
Michael Affeldt	Charter Communications	Danielle Gard	Joanne Kamiya	Monica Na	Gilberto Ruiz	Wells Fargo Foundation
Prianna Ahsan	Susan Choo	Tamara Gardner	Michael Kaufman	Nantworks	Michael Saint-Onge	Suzanne Wenzlaff
Henriette Alamillo	Dream City	Alan Gastelum	Randal Keen	Launi Nathan	Bruce Saito	Cherie White
Andrea Ambriz	City National Bank	Catherine Geanuracos	Jordan Kerner	National Recreation Foundation	Sandra Sanchez	Luann and Bob Williams
American Arts Documentary Foundation	Michael Claproth	Geosyntec Consultants	Erin and Matt King	NBC Universal Foundation	Svitlana "Dr. Victory" Sangary	Myron Wolf
American Water	Sean Cocchia	Curtis Gibbs	Ricki Kline	Cynthia Nelson	Save Our LA River Open Space	Trip & Joanne Wolf
Geoffrey Anenberg	Jennifer Cole	Marc Gittleman	Harrison Kunz	Helen Nelson	Karla Sayles	Debra Wong Yang
Teri Aranguren	Sam Comer	Steve Glenn	Cynthia Kurtz	Nelson C & Sharon Rising Living Trust	Daniel Schmit	WSP
Kevin Aronvitz	Erika Conde	Jennifer Godzsak	Maria Kuzmiskaia	David Newland	Kelly Schoeffel	Tony Yanow
Nancy Art	Mary Coyne	Goldhirsh Foundation	Tanvi Lal	Gayle Northrop	Naomi Scully	Don Zucca
Avalon Bay Communities, Inc.	Barbara Crane	Jaime Gonzales	Leslie Lassiter	Pablo Osorio	Erica Silverman	
Sharon Bachman	Dianne Cress	Baked Good	Latham and Watkins	Kathleen O'Nan	Joakim Skajaa	
Shelly Backlar	Heather Crossner	Alex Gorosh	Clare Le	Aaron Paléy	Michael Slavich	
Elizabeth Baker	Joe Crowley	Catherine Gudis	Connie Lee	Romel Pascual	Dawn Smith	
Gabriel Bang	Andy Cuervo	Dave Guttman	Lee & Associates	Patagonia	Nurit Smith	
Bank of America Charitable Foundation	Glen Dake	Robert Hammesfahr	Jordan Levin	Phyllis Patterson	Anita Sokolksy	
Beatrix Padway Charitable Trust	Renee Dake Wilson	Robert Hammond	Carol Levy	Kira Perez	Southern California Edison	
Jane Beesley	Andrea Dale	William Mark Hanna	Liberty Hill Foundation	Perkins + Will	Todd Specter	
Marianne Bender	David Bohnett Foundation	Mellette Hawksley-Smith	Elizabeth Litt	R. E. Pfister	Ronald Spindler	
Jane and Jim Beseda	Timothy Davis	Maya Hazen Manshel	Paula & Barry Litt	Seth Polen	Donald Spivack	
Regina Birdsell	Deborah Deets	Steve Hazzard	Susan Long	Ethan Polk	Peter Stanislaus	
Kafi Blumenfield	Jay Decker	Laura Hein	Los Angeles Department of Water & Power	Fredrick Pratt	Lauren Steely	
Boeing Global Corporate Citizenship	Craig Dion	Marjorie Henderson	Shelley Luce	Melissa Puls	Michele Steinberg	
Charles Boiler	Disney Worldwide Services, Inc.	Donald Hinkle-Brown	Michael Manshel	Rashida Purifoy	Olga Steingeiser	
John Boiler	Eliza Dixon	Cynthia Hirschhorn	Fernando Martinez	The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation	Lem Support	
Patrice Bone	Alex Dorsey	Steve Hirsh	Lorena Matos	Sarah Rascon	Nanette Tavella	
Duane Border	Draper Community Investment Fund	Hayley Hoffman	Andrew May	Jody Rath	Thomas Safran & Associates	
Aaron Bridgewater	Martin Dumpis	Diane Hough	Joan McCarthy	Renee Dake Wilson and Brian Wilson,	Jonathan Tillman	
Mary Bridgewater	Robert Egger	Charles Howell	Christopher McNatt	Glen DakeRed: Green Blue Fund	Brent Turner	
Jo Ann Bright	Christopher Elliott	Cynthia Hubach	Alexandra Merlino	Resources Legacy Fund	Frank Turner	
Brent Brown	Nick English	Lloyd Humphrey	Benjamin Metcalf	Estelle Reyes	Mark Turner	
Corie Brown	Stephen English	Yasmine-Imani McMorrin	Landon Miller	Maria Riddle	Union Pacific Railroad	
Gale Brownson	Margaret Engman	ICF International	Gina Michael	Rising Realty Partners / Chris Rising	Stephen Upchurch	
Omar Brownson	William Fain	Ellen Isaacs	MJM Management Consultant	Spencer Robins	UTA Foundation (United Talent Agency)	
Douglas Burdge	Smith Family	Kimberly Israel	Brian Moore	Hugo Romero	Ryan Vaillancourt	
California Community Foundation	Christine Faulkner	Poursha Jackson	Christi Moore	Joseph Romero	Dorrit Vered	
California Community Foundation –Chris & Cara Chandler	Jason Foster	Jeffrey Jacobberger	Gary Moore	Kenneth Ronney	Wendy Waldman	
California Community Foundation –Sean	Brad France	John Joanino	Piers Morgan	Rosalinde & Arthur Gilbert Foundation	Peyton Wallace	
Cocchia Fund	Olivia Frost	James Johnson	Louis Morin	Gary Ross	Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.	
Camper Van Guy	Reinvestment Fund	Melissa Jones	Cedd Moses	Miriam Rothbart	Carl Warren	
	Erin Fussell	Rashida Jones	Phillip Murray	Sherry Routa		

Studio City, CA  
Photo by Daniel Postaer



# Our Impact in 2018

## TOTAL REVENUE



Click [HERE](#) to visit our GuideStar profile for more detailed information.

*River LA is a 501(C) 3 ID# 27-2245545  
(Los Angeles River Revitalization Corporation.)*

## ENGAGEMENT METRICS

*SEE*

Increase awareness by getting us in front of as many Angelenos as possible

*CONNECT*

Create content that deeply engages Angelenos of all backgrounds, earning their trust along the way

*TALK*

Instill a sense of pride that makes Angelenos talk about the River and its future

*FOLLOW*

Capture their long-term loyalty

## ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

1.1M social media impressions

27K post/page engagements

1.2K new email subscribers

760 community meetings attendees

754 LA River digital surveys completed



# Our Team

## STAFF

Angela Barranco  
CEO

Omar Brownson  
Founding Executive Director,  
Senior Advisor

Jon Switalski  
Director of External Affairs

Jason Foster  
Director of Strategic  
Partnerships

Natalie Gonzalez  
Program Associate

Paige Hart  
Development Assistant

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Steve English, *Vice Chair*

Debra Wong Yang, *Secretary*

Leslie Lassiter, *Treasurer*

Heather Crossner

Cynthia Hirschhorn

Krisztina “Z” Holly

James Johnson

Jordan Kerner

Cedd Moses

Chris Rising

Gary Ross

Mark Roybal

Richard Weintraub

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René Jones

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Bruce Saito

Donald Spivack

Michael Strautmanis

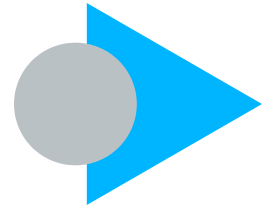
Daphne Zuniga



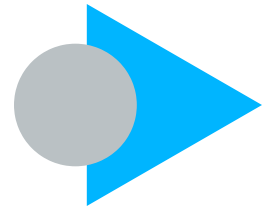
Downtown Los Angeles  
Photo by Daniel Postauer



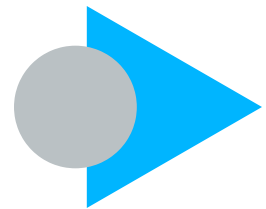
Support our mission today!



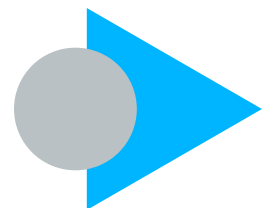
Click [HERE](#) to donate on our website



Write a check made payable to River LA



Text 1RIVER to 444999



CLICK HERE TO  
DONATE







[www.riverla.org](http://www.riverla.org)