

Steering Committee for the Los Angeles River Master Plan Update Protocols and Operating Principles

Convened by the County of Los Angeles

June 21, 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

The County of Los Angeles has begun a comprehensive and collaborative update of its Los Angeles River Master Plan, a guiding document for the future of flood protection, water resource management, recreation, active transportation, open space, wildlife habitat and economic stimulus along the 51-mile urban waterway.

The update will build upon the most recent version of LA River Master Plan—adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1996—as well as LA River plans prepared by a wide range of municipalities, agencies and organizations since then. By studying the entire river, and incorporating the latest hydrological data, flood risk management and environmental needs, County officials will identify the challenges and unrealized opportunities for 2,100 contiguous acres of publicly-owned land along the river corridor. The County is uniquely positioned to lead the effort to establish a consistent vision to revitalize the entire LA River corridor for the benefit of adjacent communities, County residents, and the environment, as part of the Master Plan Update.

The County Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Public Works to manage and coordinate the Master Plan Update and establish a Steering Committee of regional agencies, city leaders, nonprofit and community groups and interested stakeholders. The Protocols and Operating Principles establishes the framework for the Steering Committee process, underpinned by the overarching goal of creating a constructive, inclusive dialogue process. It sets forth a process where all Steering Committee members have equal opportunities for input, meeting environments are conducive to collaboration, and Steering Committee input meaningfully helps to inform and shape the updated Master Plan

2. STEERING COMMITTEE CHARGE AND ROLE IN MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The Steering Committee's charge is to play an essential role in helping to guide the Master Plan Update by providing input, ideas, comments, and feedback throughout the planning process, incorporating members' expertise, knowledge, and resources. The consultant team and Department of Public Works will consider the Steering Committee input when preparing the updated Master Plan, along with input from the broader community and stakeholder involvement process, technical and regulatory requirements, and other County needs and goals. Adoption authority for the updated Master Plan is held by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, based on the recommendation of the Department of Public Works.

As part of accomplishing the charge, the Steering Committee members commit to:

- Contribute input based on knowledge and expertise in policy, technical, and community matters, while also considering planning considerations from a holistic River-wide

perspective, seeking opportunities for a unified vision, continuity, balanced with recognition of the diversity in goals and needs in River communities.

- Partner with the project team in publicizing community engagement activities and generating involvement that represents the range and diversity of communities in the 51-mile Los Angeles River corridor, and attend community engagement activities on a regular basis.
- Consider community input and input from other stakeholders in Steering Committee meeting discussions.
- Participate in-person in all meetings, or send an alternate, for the entire two-year planning process.
- Review reference materials in advance of Steering Committee meetings.

3. PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATION PRINCIPLES

The preferred deliberation process is a collaborative process whereby Steering Committee members choose to cooperate to achieve shared and/or overlapping objectives, in support of the Board of Supervisors' direction for the Master Plan Update. By agreeing to serve on the Steering Committee, members commit to the following principles:

- Participate in an active and focused manner – commit to success of the process.
- Interact respectfully with all other members, valuing all perspectives.
- Communicate interests.
- In meetings, be brief and concise in communications, and be prepared.
- Help involve all members.
- Seek solutions for all – help to integrate each other's interests into creative solutions that address diverse needs.
- Commit to a good faith effort.
- Share relevant information.
- Attend all meetings, start on time.
- Participate effectively, using open, frank communications within the Steering Committee, and when sharing reports of Steering Committee discussions, do not attribute discussions to any individual member.
- Keep cell phones on silent and minimize screen time during meetings.

Meetings will be conducted using a facilitator, who will:

- Maintain a neutral position during Steering Committee discussions.
- Work to ensure that all Steering Committee members have the opportunity participate equally.
- Guide meeting discussions per the agenda and manage time.
- Provide dialogue activities as needed for productive outcomes.
- Enforce the Steering Committee collaboration principles stated above.
- Ask "why" to clarify interests.
- Track actions, next steps, and deadlines.

- Participate in agenda preparation as part of meeting the above responsibilities and integrating the Steering Committee in the planning process.

4. STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

All stakeholders involved in development of the 1996 master plan, the River Cooperation Committee, and AB530 in addition to known River advocates were considered in the process. In order to ensure that meetings are productive and manageable, the committee size is limited to 35 members. The final members were selected based on geographical representation and technical expertise in key priority areas of the master plan – water, people and environment.

5. PRIMARY MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

The protocol for primary members and alternates is guided by goals for consistent involvement, which will benefit the Steering Committee process and contribute to the success of the Los Angeles River Master Plan Update. Primary members refer to the members who were initially invited. Each primary member can identify an alternate representative or a proxy who can substitute for the primary if she or he is unavailable for a meeting. Alternates are highly encouraged to attend the meetings as observers. In the event of an alternate is asked to step in for a primary member, it is the primary's responsibility to ensure that the alternate is briefed on the process to date before activity participating.

6. SUBCOMMITTEES

Three Subcommittees—Water, People, and Environment—are integrated into the planning process. In the quarterly rounds, the Subcommittees will generally meet one week following the Steering Committee meetings for more extensive discussion of the topics discussed in the Steering Committee meetings. Depending on the focus of individual Subcommittees, they may decide to focus on a subset of the Steering Committee topics. The Steering Committee's initial input, questions, ideas, and concerns should help to guide the Subcommittee meeting discussions. Subcommittees reports will be provided at the Steering Committee meetings.

Steering Committee members will comprise the Subcommittees. Maintaining moderate sizes of the Subcommittees will contribute to productive and inclusive discussions.

7. MEETING LOGISTICS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Logistics for meetings and communications with the Steering Committee are established below. Adjustments are possible to address opportunities for process improvements and/or project needs.

Project Duration

The duration of the Master Plan Update is two years.

Meeting Schedule and Start Time

Steering Committee meetings will occur quarterly, starting in the first quarter of 2018. Specific dates will be set at least six months in advance. The standard start time will be 9:00 a.m., and members can count on meeting durations of three hours.

Meeting Location

All Steering Committee meetings will be conducted at the Department of Public Works offices in Alhambra, located at 900 S. Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803.

Agendas

The primary discussion topics in meetings will directly correspond to the planning process for updating the Master Plan, as shown in the Steering Committee Road Map in Appendix A. Agendas will be distributed via email one week in advance of each meeting.

Spanish Translator

Spanish interpretation will be provided during the Steering Committee meetings. Interpretation for other languages will be provided as needed.

Meeting Summaries

The facilitation team will prepare and distribute meeting summaries.

Online Materials

Meeting agendas and summaries will be posted on the project website.

Applicable Brown Act Requirements

The County of Los Angeles has determined that the Steering Committee is subject to the Brown Act, which protects public access to meetings of committees formed by local government agencies. Applicable requirements include:

- Posting meeting agenda and reference materials a minimum of 72 hours before the meeting.
- Providing for public comment during the meeting.

8. MEMBER-TO-MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

The following guidance applies to communication between Steering Committee members.

Document Sharing

Steering Committee members may want to share information and documents with other members during the planning process. To ensure that all members have the same information available to them, all documents are to be distributed through the established point of contact, who is listed at the end of this document.

Email Communication

The Steering Committee is meant to be a collaborative experience, in which members work through issues and dialogue in person to gain mutual understanding. As such, Steering Committee members agree to avoid engaging in email “dialogue” with other members, and instead commit to using the in-person Steering Committee meetings for dialogue and discussion purposes. Email exchanges often do not constitute constructive dialogue and at times, can result in unproductive exchanges that can cause unraveling of mutual understanding and collaboration.

9. MEDIA INTERACTION

Given the high interest in the Los Angeles River Master Plan Update, there will likely be coverage in local media, blogs and other forms of communications. The overriding consideration in all communications among Steering Committee members is to honor and sustain the constructive, collaborative process. While Steering Committee members are free to speak with the media from their perspectives as individuals or representing their respective organization, members are not to serve as a spokesperson on behalf of the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee members agree to:

- Not make statements about Steering Committee meeting discussions and deliberations in conversations with the media.
- Forward all media inquiries regarding the Steering Committee to Carolina Hernandez, Project Manager (see Section 9 below).

Steering Committee members are encouraged to respect the open, frank discussions that occur within their meetings and not attribute specific conversations to other Steering Committee members in any interactions with the media and other external communication channels.,

10. POINT OF CONTACT FOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The established point of contact for Steering Committee members' questions, suggestions, and input is:

Carolina Hernandez
Project Manager for LA River Master Plan Update
Los Angeles County
Department of Public Works
(626) 458-4322
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