

# LOS ANGELES RIVER REVITALIZATION MASTER PLAN

Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. *What's the overall goal of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan?***

The goal of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan is to create a 20-year blueprint for development and management of the LA River. To accomplish this, The City of Los Angeles Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River identified the following objectives to guide the revitalization process:

- Establish environmentally sensitive urban design guidelines, land use guidelines, and development guidelines for the River zone that will create economic development opportunities to enhance and improve River-adjacent communities by providing open space, housing, retail spaces such as restaurants and cafes, educational facilities, and places for other public institutions.
- Improve the environment, enhance water quality, improve water resources, and improve the ecological functioning of the River.
- Provide public access to the River.
- Provide significant recreation space and open space, new trails, and improve natural habitats to support wildlife.
- Preserve and enhance the flood control features of the River.
- Foster a growth in community awareness of the Los Angeles River, and pride in the Los Angeles River.

At the end of the 18-month planning process, the City will have a set of documents that provide a clear, implementable vision for the revitalization of the Los Angeles River.

### **2. *Who are the key LA River stakeholders?***

Every individual, organization, and business in the Los Angeles region is a key River stakeholder. The planning process will involve everyone in decision-making activities via well-publicized workshops, meetings and River-related events.

### **3. *What is the Revitalization Master Plan timeline?***

The LA River Revitalization Master Plan is expected to be completed in 18 months. Public meetings and workshops will be held at key milestones throughout the process.

### **4. *How is this Revitalization Plan being funded?***

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River was instrumental in securing \$3 million in funding from the City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power for the planning effort.

**5. What are the estimated costs of implementing the Revitalization Master Plan?**

The Revitalization Master Planning effort will estimate the costs and identify possible funding sources for recommended modifications.

**6. What is the length of the Los Angeles River?**

The entire Los Angeles River runs 51 miles through urban Los Angeles (both through several cities and the County of Los Angeles). This project specifically focuses on a 32-mile stretch from Canoga Park through downtown Los Angeles.

**7. Given the length of the LA River, what geographic areas are you focusing on?**

The Revitalization Master Plan process is developing and considering alternatives for the entire River corridor, which is generally defined as 250 feet on each side of the River throughout the 32-mile reach defined above. Within this area, the consultant team is further charged with identifying five (5) specific “nodes” for focused efforts to develop and consider alternatives for more intensive modifications. These nodes will be approximately ¼-mile in length and may extend in width beyond the 250 feet on each side of the River. The Community Outreach effort will seek input in identifying the location of these nodes.

**8. Will other neighboring cities be involved in this effort?**

The Revitalization Master Plan is currently being coordinated by the City of Los Angeles. Throughout the planning process, the City will seek regional cooperation with adjacent cities such as Glendale and Burbank, along with the County of Los Angeles and other river-related agencies in order to integrate projects and management objectives to leverage funding sources, cost efficiencies, visibility, and community support.

**9. What effect will this Plan have on existing projects near the River?**

Any work will be coordinated with existing projects and appropriate agencies to minimize or avoid adverse impacts and to leverage opportunities that arise as a result of the planning process.

**10. Will it be possible to remove the concrete from the river?**

The Master Planning effort will include alternatives to reconfigure the channel dimensions which may include the removal of concrete portions of the river. Any changes made to the channel will be made to maintain or enhance safety during peak flow events. Any materials removed from the LA River will be disposed or recycled in an environmentally sensitive manner. Removal of the concrete, if possible, will provide creative landscaping opportunities for natural conditions.

**11. Will I be able to continue to jog, walk or ride along the LA River?**

Yes, part of the Plan is to maintain and enhance recreational opportunities and overall quality of life along the LA River. The Plan will look at diverse recreational

improvements such as green space, bike paths, sports fields and other opportunities to enjoy the LA River's resources.

**12. Who is responsible for keeping the LA River safe and clean?**

Maintenance of the LA River falls under several jurisdictions within the City, County, and Army Corps of Engineers. The City understands that management of the River must be a shared responsibility among various agencies and organizations. By engaging different partners, the plan can result in a truly collaborative vision with recommendations for inventive and integrated strategies for managing the River.

**13. Will there be meetings where the general public can learn about and comment on the Revitalization Plan?**

There will be numerous opportunities during the next 18 months to attend and participate in public meetings and workshops. These meetings will be well publicized in multiple languages via mailings, mainstream and community newspapers, the project website [www.lariver.org](http://www.lariver.org), and radio and cable TV advertisements. The first series of public workshops will be held in October 2005.

**14. Who is coordinating the LA River revitalization effort? What is the experience of the consultant team?**

Management of the LA River Revitalization Plan for the City of Los Angeles is the Bureau of Engineering supported by the Department of Water and Power and the Ad Hoc River Committee. In July 2005, Pasadena-based Tetra Tech, Inc., a water resources management firm with significant nationwide experience running projects similar to the LA River planning effort, was selected as the lead consultant for the project. This highly integrated planning effort of City and consultant staff also includes experienced firms in the disciplines of urban design and planning, landscape architecture, master planning, governance alternatives, economic development, economic modeling, environmental analysis and community outreach that have completed complex waterfront and master planning projects both locally and across the country.

**15. Will there be a committed effort to prevent crime and blight from impacting new recreation areas along the River?**

Yes, a key component of revitalization efforts is to address safety concerns so that everyone can enjoy the River and its environs. The Plan will look at designing safe spaces as well as integrating elements such as lighting and maintenance recommendations into the process.

**16. How will the planning process address existing flood protection?**

The number one priority of the planning process is to preserve the flood protection that is provided by the existing river system. No adverse impacts to this protection would be recommended nor implemented. Rather, opportunities to enhance flood protection and safety through a variety of means will be considered. These may include the use of detention storage of flood waters, additional channel capacity, and wise watershed practices, for example.

**17. How will the Revitalization Master Plan reflect the neighborhood values and aspirations of specific communities and constituencies?**

The LA River planning effort will include significant community input throughout the process so that all communities and constituencies have a say in helping design a future blueprint for the River for generations to come.

**18. Will the Revitalization Master Plan include public art?**

The planning effort will invite stakeholders including residents and artists to dialogue on public art standards, projects and policies. The Plan will work with the City's Cultural Affairs Department and other institutions to prepare recommendations for a LA River arts policy.

**19. How will non English speaking stakeholders be informed of the plan and encouraged to participate?**

All meeting notifications and public materials will be translated into Spanish. If requested, materials will also be translated into Korean and Chinese or other languages upon request. Additionally, multi-lingual translators will be in attendance at public workshops and meetings to provide non-English speakers with on-the-spot translation of proceedings and activities.

**20. Will the Plan seek to incorporate environmentally friendly land use, transportation, and water technologies?**

Yes. The Revitalization Plan will seek to create a sustainable living and working environment along the LA River. The City of Los Angeles has already embarked on landmark programs using state-of-the-art technologies and practices to provide alternative sources of clean energy, water conservation, and pollution prevention. The Los Angeles River Revitalization Plan will be developed to showcase and enhance such technologies that may include, but are not limited to, solar energy, water-saving devices, tree planting and use of permeable surfaces to preserve underground water.

**21. Who will ultimately execute the Revitalization Master Plan at the end of the process?**

The Plan will be a City of Los Angeles document, containing specific implementation recommendations. The City will take a lead role in the implementation process, which may include identifying responsibility, authority, and funding sources from various City, State, and Federal agencies/organizations as well as leveraged funds from the private sector.

**22. Have other cities taken on projects like this?**

Numerous cities across the United States have implemented highly successful riverfront projects that have revitalized adjacent communities. Similar projects include:

- San Antonio Riverwalk – San Antonio, TX
- Brush Creek Cultural Corridor – Kansas City, MO

- Memphis Riverfront Master Plan – Memphis, TN
- Charles River Master Plan – Boston, MA
- Greening of the Platte River – Denver, CO
- River Park and Balboa park Redevelopment – San Diego, CA
- Rio Salado Feasibility Ecosystem Restoration Study – Phoenix & Tempe, AZ
- North Delaware Riverfront – Philadelphia, PA
- Allegheny Riverfront – Pittsburgh, PA

Success stories include, for example, the San Antonio Riverwalk which has been the catalyst of over \$2.8 billion in tourism for the City of San Antonio and the Brush Creek Cultural Corridor in Kansas City which has generated more than \$750 million in new development.

***23. What was the motivation for this project?***

The Los Angeles River has become neglected over the years and, at many locations along its path, is an eyesore. Yet, through the years, activists and the City itself recognized the Los Angeles River as offering huge potential for natural, community, and economic resources which, if harnessed, would present significant opportunities to revitalize its adjacent neighborhoods. Against this background, the City's Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River spearheaded efforts to do the Revitalization Master Plan – a plan aimed at enhancing existing communities by creating a safe environment with more open space, recreation, nature, riverfront living and commerce, new jobs, and economic development.