

September 12, 2005
For Immediate Release

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MAYOR, CITY OFFICIALS, CALL FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN CITY'S LARGEST PUBLIC WORKS PROJECT IN THE 21st CENTURY -
City Officials Announce the First of 18 Public Meetings to Map out a 20-year Plan Linking Communities and Restoring the Los Angeles River

LOS ANGELES, September 12, 2005 - Calling for extensive public participation, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, joined by City officials, today launched the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, the City's largest Public Works project in the 21st Century.

"The Los Angeles River represents one of our greatest opportunities to improving the quality of life for so many Angelenos," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "We have an opportunity to create pocket parks and landscaped walkways...to create places where children can play and adults can stroll."

The City of Los Angeles' Department of Public Works, Bureau of Engineering, will hold 18 workshops during the next 18 months to ensure that all residents, activists and stakeholders have an ongoing voice in the L.A. River revitalization efforts.

"Once we have completed this Master Plan, we will have set the table for what will be one of the greatest Public Works projects in the City's history," said Councilmember Ed P. Reyes, Chair of the City Council's Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River. "This will be a community-driven, environmentally-sound renewal of the Los Angeles River, the final frontier of open space in the City of Los Angeles."

At Monday's press conference, City officials announced the first two public meetings. Both will take place in October from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the following locations:

Saturday, October 15, 2005 - North Weddington Recreation Center, 10844 Acama Street, North Hollywood

Saturday, October 22, 2005 -Goodwill Worksource Center, 342 San Fernando Road in Los Angeles

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During the meetings, participants will be asked to share their objectives, concerns, dreams and aspirations for the Los Angeles River project. Meeting organizers will also share similar river projects from across the country with the community.

The Master Plan process is one of the first major initiatives of the Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River, which was formed in October 2002 to serve as a clearing house for projects within the City of Los Angeles. Chaired by Councilmember Reyes, the Ad Hoc Committee also includes Councilmembers Eric Garcetti, Wendy Greuel, Tom LaBonge and Jan Perry.

Mayor Villaraigosa was joined by the Los Angeles City Council Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River, Department of Water and Power, Public Works officials, environmental groups and residents.

"Nothing could be more exciting than to see this day come when we move forward the actual planning process to revitalize the Los Angeles River as it runs through the historic heart of Los Angeles," said Councilmember LaBonge. "This public project will absolutely transform and enhance every community it touches."

Feedback gathered from the October meetings will serve as a starting point for the City's work as plans are developed to revitalize the River and its surrounding communities.

"The Master Plan is a huge step forward in the revitalization of the Los Angeles River," said Councilmember Garcetti. "This process will ultimately bring major improvements to every community along the river."

The Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan is a 20-year, multi-objective strategy that focuses on renewing 32 miles - from Canoga Park to Boyle Heights -- of the Los Angeles River. The objectives of the Master Plan include providing recreation, parks, wildlife habitat, improved water resources and enhanced ecological functioning of the River. At the same time, the Plan aims to identify housing, transportation and economic development opportunities that will enhance existing communities.

"This is an opportunity for our City to fully explore the potential of our Los Angeles River, gaining the insight and input of Los Angeles residents," said Councilmember Perry. "Through a coordinated and cohesive effort, we can create environmentally-sound recreation centers for everyone to enjoy today and tomorrow."

In August, the City hired Tetra Tech, an environmental/ engineering team based in Pasadena, to develop the \$3 million Master Plan. The plan is funded by the City's Department of Water and Power.

"Revitalization of the Los Angeles River enables us to re-develop and utilize existing open space to create recreational opportunities for the diverse communities throughout Los Angeles connected by the river," said Councilmember Wendy Greuel.