Welcome and Introductions

Gary Hildebrand, Deputy Director (LACFCD), welcomed the members of the committee and attendees.

Approval of April 7, 2014 Meeting Summary

Meeting Summary approved.

Items for the Committee's Information

California High Speed Rail Update (Palmdale to Burbank and Burbank to Los Angeles Project Section)

Michelle Boehm (California High Speed Rail Authority) provided an update on the California High Speed Rail Project. The current project is of interest to the River Cooperation Committee because its alignment will affect the Los Angeles River. The California High Speed Rail Authority will run through Downtown Los Angeles, crossing the River either under the Rio de Los Angeles Park, or at grade above the River. There are two project sections: Palmdale to Burbank and from Burbank to Los Angeles. The Palmdale to Burbank project section will connect the Antelope Valley to the San Fernando Valley and will be approximately 45 miles in length, while the Burbank to Los Angeles project section will be approximately 15 miles in length. The project from Palmdale to Los Angeles is expected to be completed along with 500 miles of rail from San Francisco to Anaheim. Next steps will involve completing the Scoping Report, preparing draft environmental documents, and coordinating with responsible agencies.

Questions and Comments:

Shahram Kharaghani (BOS) asked about greening elements for portions of rail that will go through cities. Michelle Boehm responded that they have allowed for such developments within the master plan.

David Van Dorpe (USACE) asked if the authorities would be able to look for additional right-of-way or if they would only use existing. Although the authority is using the existing right-of-way, they do not intend to have impacts on the river. Most of the rail will be set away from the river, only South of Union Station would be at the riverbank.
Northeast Los Angeles Riverfront Collaborative

Gerardo Ruvalcaba (City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD)) gave a presentation on the Northeast Los Angeles Riverfront Collaborative Vision Plan. The community received a $2.25 million grant from HUD (Community Challenge Planning Grant Program). The program develops an interdisciplinary partnership to capture the needs of the community. The three objectives of the plan are to create a comprehensive implementation strategy for community revitalization and reinvestment, create a model of engagement and public media to foster civic participation in the revitalization of communities, and engage the community in identifying a Northeast Los Angeles Riverfront District. There are five program elements which include creating an economic and sustainable riverfront, planning coordination, workforce development, regional food study, civic engagement, and tool development. The implementation strategies for this plan include implementation of a roadmap and other summer youth programs among the Northeast Los Angeles Riverfront Communities.

Questions and Comments:
Deborah Weintraub (BOE) asked if someone will be able to come back after meeting with Council about next steps. Gerardo Ruvalcaba (EWDD) hopes to return to the meeting in January.

Glendale Narrows Riverwalk

Marc Stirdivant (City of Glendale) provided the committee with an update on the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk Project. The project started in 2006 as a partnership with Northeast Trees. In 2012 Phase I opened with a bike path, equestrian area, two parks and interpretive signage. Phase II will lengthen the bike path, add two parks and possibly connect the two existing bike paths in Glendale. Phase III will include the construction of bridges between Griffith park and Atwater Village. The next community meetings will be held on October 29th and December 11th.

Questions and Comments:
Deborah Weintraub asked about funding of the bridges. Marc Stirdivant answered that as of yet, the bridges are unfunded.
Shahram Kharaghani asked about the source of water for parks of Phase II. Marc Stirdivant answers that the parks will utilize reclaimed water.

David Van Dorpe asked if the city has compared designs to the LA River (ARBOR) Study’s Alternative 20 Project that City of Los Angeles and the Corp has developed. Marc Stirdivant answered that they expect a good deal of coordination to take place. Across Verdugo Wash there are a number of issues with connectivity, and they are committed to work with the City of LA’s LA River Project Office to make it seamless. Alternative 20 looks at widening the confluence so they don’t want to place projects in its footprint that may later have to be removed.

Deborah Weintraub commended the City of Glendale on the great potential for partnerships.

Items for the Committee’s Consideration and Recommendation

Colfax Pedestrian Bridge Beautification Project

Bill Hammond and Francesca Corra from the Studio City Beautification Association (SCBA) presented on the many projects the SCBA has undertaken in the past five years along with the proposed Colfax Pedestrian Bridge Beautification Project. The project proposes to add landscaping to a recently paved access road of the Los Angeles River adjacent to Colfax Avenue. Both banks of the Los Angeles River will be landscaped and irrigated on either side of the Pedestrian Bridge which runs parallel to Colfax Avenue. The project proposes to bring in water from Troost Avenue, to include swale improvements, and follow the LARMMP. Similar to their previous projects, SBCA would like to incorporate a dry creek bed to
capture as much water as possible. The association expects project costs to reach $70,000 and the improvement will be maintained by the SCBA.

Committee Discussion:

Deborah Weintraub mentioned the challenge and concern of bringing water to the project, and that the Pedestrian Bridge does need attention, but the city does not have the funds.

Terri Grant (LACFCD) mentioned that the LACFCD is supportive of this project and that since some of the requests are through LACFCD, we will need to go to management to see if we could waive fees. The project will require permits from both LACFCD and USACE.

David van Dorpe mentions the project would require a 408 permit, but a minor 408 permit.

The project was reviewed and recommended by the committee.

**Moorpark Point Project**

Jim Higgins (The Village Gardeners of the Los Angeles River) presented the Moorpark Point Project. The project will involve the landscaping and establishment of a greenway and pocket park along the south bank of the Los Angeles River between Moorpark Street and Fulton Avenue on South Valleyheart Drive in Sherman Oaks. The group has already been working at this site weeding and clearing the area adjacent to the river. The Moorpark Point Park will act as a highlight for passive entertainment, and act as a viewing point along the River. One defining feature of the project will be the Sherman Oak, providing a canopy of filtered shade. The Moorpark Point will replace the asphalt with permeable material surface, and artwork to portray theme of Los Angeles River Life.

Committee Discussion:

Deborah Weintraub commends The Village Gardeners on a wonderful project and piece of riverfront where we don’t have to plan for cars. The group will meet challenges though in maintaining permits and planting such a large tree so close to the channel wall.

Sree Kumar asked if the point is attached to the bridge. Jim responds that on the other side of the bridge, there is vegetation growing naturally, so they were inspired by what they already saw.

The project was reviewed and recommended by the committee.

**Agency Updates**

- **US Army Corps of Engineers (David Van Dorpe)**
  - 2014 Los Angeles River and Sepulveda Dam Boating Program: In conclusion, the 2014 boating program was a huge success. These two areas of the river open for kayaking officially closed on Labor Day and are now closed for the summer season.
  - Estuary Draining: At the mouth of the LA River in Long Beach, the Corp has awarded a $5.4 million contract to dredge out the estuary.
  - Maintenance Activities: Summer maintenance is being completed in preparation for winter storms. Don’t drive, ride, or walk in the rivers when there is a risk of high water levels and velocities.
  - 408 Permit: The Corp is issuing a new section to the 408 permit. The Corp will be more stringent on when the project will require a minor or major 408 permit. The major 408 permit will need to be reviewed by the USACE Headquarters in Washington DC.

- **Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Richard Gomez):**
  - North Valleyheart Riverwalk and the Los Angeles River Headwaters: These two projects’ grand opening events were held on June 21, 2014 and July 12, 2014, respectively. Both these events
were largely successful with speakers from City of Los Angeles Councilmembers and Neighborhood Councils.

- Rory M Shaw Wetlands: This project received the ISI Envision Platinum award on August 26, 2014 and held a ceremonial ground breaking event on September 20, 2014. The project will consist of 21 acres of a detention basin, 15 acres of park space, and 10 acres of wetland to provide flood protection, recreational benefits, water quality benefits, habitat, and groundwater recharge.

- Los Angeles River Regional Bike Path: This project is still in the conceptual planning stage. The County received funding from Universal to initiate the Preliminary Scoping Report for the alignment of a Grade I bike path from Whitsett Ave to Riverside Drive. The Scoping Report has been completed and is currently being presented during Neighborhood Council meetings for feedback.

- City of Los Angeles (Deborah Weintraub):
  - Albion River Park: This project is currently in predesign and in preparing a water quality report to understand the implications of the project. Predesign is to be completed by January 2015. The project held a committee oversight meeting in September with 35 people in attendance
  - Hyperion Bridge Project: This federally funded project contains a temporary bridge diversion to use during the restoration of the existing bridge. Efforts are being made to keep the new bridge in operation once the construction is even completed. The project is currently being evaluated under CEQA, and construction will be started in spring 2015.
  - LAR Ecosystem Feasibility Study: The City is currently working with the Army Corps to address public comments and finalize the study.

Public Comments/Other Items

- Shahram Kharaghani provided a quick update on the One Water LA 2040 Plan, which seeks to take a collaborative approach to develop an integrated framework for management of the City's watershed, water resources and water facilities. The 2040 plan will look at different types of water (stormwater, greywater, and recycled water) to get input from everyone for guidance and outreach program as part of mayor's sustainability plan. For the Enhanced Watershed Management Plan, workshops will be held in the first two weeks of November.

- Kevin Carter, landscape architect for Glendale Riverwalk Project mentioned that it is important to include and ask for greening as part of infrastructure projects early on to ensure that it happens.

- Resident from NE San Fernando Valley voiced their concerns in regard to the High Speed Rail project. Their main concern is with the dams and how the High Speed Rail will disrupt the integrity of the dams. David Van Dorpe did mention that if the project disrupts the dam or a US Water under the US Army Corps jurisdiction, the project proponent will require a regulatory permit with the appropriate environment documentation to make sure it addresses any impacts.

Next Meeting

The next RCC meeting will be hosted by the City of Los Angeles on Monday, January 5, 2015, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, Los Angeles City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Room 1060.

Comments regarding this meeting summary should be directed to Kevin Kim, kkim@dpw.lacounty.gov, and Richard Gomez, rgomez@dpw.lacounty.gov

For more information about the LA River Cooperation Committee, and to access meeting documents, please visit: www.lariver.org/rcc.