**Welcome and Introductions**
Deborah Weintraub, Chief Deputy City Engineer/Chief Architect, welcomed the members of the committee and attendees.

**Public Comments**
There were no requests for Public Comment at the time this item was called per the posted agenda. However, two individuals from the public requested to speak on the items of the agenda after this item and each were provided 5 minutes in total to provide general comments and comments on the items of the agenda.

**Approval of July 1, 2019 Meeting Summary**
Meeting summary approved.

**Items for the Committee’s Consideration and Recommendation**

**Los Angeles River Way – San Fernando Valley Completion – City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering (Nur Malhis)**

Mr. Malhis provided an overview of the project. This project is part of a larger plan to complete the 13 miles of gaps in the bike path along the LA River in the Valley. The project is in the West San Fernando Valley from Vanalden Ave to Balboa Blvd and represents segments 1 and 2 representing approximately 3 of the 13 miles needed to close the gaps. The project is currently at 60% design, design will be completed by June 2021 and permits are still being coordinated. Construction is anticipated to start January 2022 and conclude in June 2025. The project consists of constructing a bike path, pedestrian path, landscaping, six under crossings (in the channel under bridges), one bridge, one on-street crossing fencing, lighting, bioswales, street end pocket parks, wayfinding signage, and new access points. Additionally, this project will include biking and walking connections for the neighboring community, other regional biking and walking routes via traffic calming circles and new bike routes. Depending on the available ROW width and new path will provide for separated pedestrian and bicycle uses. This project will add to the West Valley’s livability by expanding active transportation options and provide new and safe access to transit, homes, schools, nature, recreation, businesses, and other community amenities.
Summary of Questions and Comments:

- Ms. Washington asked that for the properties that currently have fences that abut the river ROW (slide 9 of 14) who will maintain their fence?
  - Mr. Malhis responded the owners will continue to maintain their own property fences.
- Mr. Lilley asked if the City will finalize an O&M agreement with the County that designates responsible parties.
  - Mr. Malhis responded that the City is developing an O&M agreement with the County and also working to designate one or more LA City Departments or pilot a single entity to manage the path. They are also interested in options that simplify the process for residents to easily report issues or maintenance needs along the completed path.
- Mr. Lilley asked if the current design has coordinated with the updated LA River Master Plan process regarding design and signage.
  - Mr. Malhis responded that they have met with the LA County team to discuss and will design the project to meet those standards.
- Ms. Washington asked who is responsible for Graffiti removal along the property fences.
  - Mr. Malhis responded that the City will take care of graffiti removal on the river side of the fence.
- Mr. Tam encouraged the use of the bioretention system to treat the stormwater from the bicycle path versus sheet flow to the river.
  - Mr. Malhis responded that they are looking at options to treat the stormwater flows from the bicycle path. The street ends will still be implemented to reduce pollutants from the streets into the River. Looking to work with Sanitation and the County for additional resources to address stormwater.

Committee Action: **Recommended**

**Items for the Committee's Information**

**Los Angeles River & Verdugo Wash Confluence Feasibility Study (Trust for Public Land, Robin Marks)**

This feasibility study explores opportunities to align existing land uses with proposed LA River revitalization while equitably working with residents and vital job providers.

The Plan proposes a transitional ‘green jobs zone’ to augment existing City and County plans for the Confluence.

The plan evaluated and included:

- Current land uses and the environmental condition of those sites;
- Opportunities for and barriers to sustainable and equitable revitalization;
- Future scenarios inclusive of the existing businesses that will be most impacted by existing plans;
- Research and coordination of existing projects & plans;
- Business involvement to identify needs and priorities;
- Strategic recommendations including phasing strategies of future scenarios.

The study focused on the following issues, constraints and opportunities:

- Groundwater Threats – Opportunity: Stormwater Management
- Air Quality - Opportunity: Air Quality Improvement and Heat Island Reduction
- Connectivity, Access and Safety – Opportunity: Pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular infrastructure improvements

The plan provides two main design scenarios A: Advancing the Vision and B: Deepening the Commitment that offer levels of changes that can take place in the area. Both design scenarios include variations of new parks, urban air scrubbers, new cool roofs, stormwater biofiltration zones, rain tanks, increasing tree canopy, improving the streets and connections to the rivers, improved bike lanes, shared parking and additional opportunities to green the area.
Summary of Questions and Comments:

- Ms. Weintraub asked when the report was completed and if it is available online?
  - Ms. Mark stated the report was completed in May 2019 and they would be happy to work with LARiverworks to post it on LARiver.org.
- Ms. Weintraub asked what will be TPL’s next steps?
  - TPL is committed to help move this forward, but this is a different type of project for TPL as it involves more than just a Park. The Mayor’s Economic Work Force Development team may be a good choice to help move this project forward and help create an Eco Jobs area.
- Ms. Washington do you know how many people use public transit to get to the jobs at this location?
  - Over 300 employees in the area and they were using all types of transportation and many of the employees were from the local area.

Harvard Westlake River Park (Harvard-Westlake School – David Weil and Stacy Marble)

Mr. Weil provided an overview of the project. In October 2017, Harvard-Westlake announced its purchase of Weddington Golf & Tennis, a 16-acre property in Studio City bounded by Whitsett Avenue and the Los Angeles River, less than a mile from Harvard-Westlake’s upper school campus. Over the next few years, the school intends to develop the Harvard-Westlake River Park campus.

Harvard-Westlake released design concepts, a project website, and began hosting invited forums about the project during the 2019 summer.

Harvard-Westlake River Park will offer athletic and recreational opportunities to our students and to the Studio City community. The Harvard-Westlake River Park campus will provide athletic facilities desired by the School while offering numerous benefits to the Studio City community. Specifically, the project will include elements for new parks, public access, education and water quality treatment.

The project will include:

- Improved park amenities along the LA River including maintenance and security of the Greenway.
- State-of-the-art athletic facilities.
- Fulfillment of student health & wellness initiatives.
- Addition of new athletic facilities will allow Harvard-Westlake athletes to complete their training and competition by 7 p.m. on most days.
- Six-acres of public park, plazas, water features, wooded areas, and other natural spaces open dawn to dusk.
- Improvements to and ongoing maintenance of existing open space.
- Continued public enjoyment of community tennis facilities.
- Access to a new community room.
- Public walking & jogging trail around the perimeter of the site.
- Stormwater capture and re-use.

Key Project Elements for LARCC:

- Provide public access to substantial portions of the River Park, its open spaces and its recreational amenities, including continued public access that will feature native plants and outdoor educational elements.
- Subterranean Water Reclamation and Storage of 40 acres of stormwater that drains to the intersection of Valley Spring Ln and Whitsett Ave.
- The Gymnasium will be designed to meet the RIO design guidelines and is 100’ from the LA River and will feature a visitor center and cafe.
- The project also includes improvements and additional connections between the site and the existing Zev Yaroslavsky Greenway.
- The new project will replace 160 non-native trees mostly Mexican Fan Palms and Eucalyptus and all new plants will be all Rio-approved species and include canopy and understory plantings.
Summary of Questions and Comments:

- Ms. Weintraub what is the current project schedule?
  - Mr. Weil stated that they will be submitting their initial application to the City within the next few months. After that it may take 18-24 months to complete the CEQA and permitting process before construction can start.

- Ms. Weintraub have you coordinated with the Fire Department regarding additional access to their adjacent fire station?
  - Mr. Weil said they will coordinate with the Fire Department on this.

- Ms. Weintraub where is parking for the project?
  - Mr. Weil stated parking will be located below ground with access from Whitsett.

- Mr. Tam commended the project for treating and storing stormwater that flows toward the intersection?
  - Mr. Weil said they are looking forward to working with the City and County on this project.

- Mr. Lilley have you thought about the boundary between the park and the trail in terms of operation hours and fencing and restrooms?
  - Mr. Weil stated they would like to have athletic areas tightly controlled during the schools use for the facilities, otherwise areas of the park and facilities will be open to the public. The trail would most likely always be open. They plan to have a public restroom.

Report out on Sediment Removal – US Army Corps of Engineers (Eric Nguyen)

Mr. Nguyen provided an update on the Sediment Removal effort in the Glendale Narrows portion of the LA River. The Vegetation and Sediment removal started in 2016 and has occurred in phases throughout reaches from Burbank Western Channel to Taylor Yard. The first stage was removal of non-native invasive vegetation, the second stage was removal of rootballs and rhizomes, and the third stage was removal of sediment and rocks. Depending on the location along the channel and the previous vegetation or sediment the project has included all or some of those stages. All sediment that was hauled away was tested for contamination and met the thresholds for placement at Lopez Dam Sediment Placement Site. The USACE has also continued to remove trash and debris within the Glendale Narrows sections. Highlighted parts of the project include the removal of 4,710 cy of sediment and 2,720 cy of rhizomes, stumps and debris from reach 2A, 3A, 4A and 4B at of cost of $807,000.

The removal efforts have improved the channel capacity in most reaches, but some areas still need additional work that will be on-going. Mr. Nguyen provided an update on the Hesco Barriers that were installed in 2016 in advance of the El Nino storm season. Due to additional vegetation and sediment removal for increased channel capacity improvement they are not ready to be removed yet. The estimated cost of removal is $1.75 million.

Routine work for this next year includes continued trash and debris removal, vegetation management and graffiti abatement. New upcoming work includes fence repairs along reaches 2-6, Slauson Ave/Belvedere Drain Embankment and Invert Repair, Verdugo Wash Ramp Repair, Burbank/Western and LAR Transition Repair and embankment repairs to Reach 2A.

Summary of Questions and Comments

- Ms. Weintraub asked about the fence repair near Taylor Yard and also where people can find additional information if they want to know more about the USACE projects?
  - Mr. Nguyen stated the Corps does have a website, but they don’t have capacity to keep it up to date now with project info but are looking for resources to do that. Mr. Nguyen corrected himself saying that the fence repairs will not be taking place near Taylor Yard.

- Ms. Weintraub asked a question regarding the channel capacity clean out comparison numbers?
  - Mr. Nguyen clarified that they are comparing the work they have done in 2019 to the 2016 channel capacity.

- Mr. Lafferty asked if one of the prime reasons for the vegetation removal was to expose the toe of the levee to do proper inspection?
  - Mr. Nguyen stated it was to help with the toe inspection and to also be able to drive on the toe in addition to increasing channel capacity.
Mr. Bunker asked if some of the vegetation removal in the upstream reaches releasing sediment that is accumulating in the downstream reaches as shown in the channel capacity numbers?
  - Mr. Nyguyen we don’t have clear information to answer that question but it might be happening.

LA River Walkers and Watchers Presentation (Evelyn Aleman, Bob Akre, and Joe Macias)

The L.A. River Walkers and Watchers (LARWW) are neighbors in the North San Fernando Valley who volunteer to help preserve the L.A. River bike path as a community resource for all to enjoy. The host monthly clean-ups along the river on the 4th Saturday of the Month.

Their mission is to ensure that local government agencies, state conservancies and joint power authorities with L.A. River jurisdiction provide:
  - public safety;
  - maintenance and resource-management services;
  - enforce regulations;
  - address health concerns; and
  - care for the overall wellbeing of natural resources along the L.A. River bike path.

They started in November 2017 to address concerns along the LA River bike path at Tampa Avenue regarding maintenance, operations and design of elements. The number one challenge they identified is who is responsible for maintenance along the LA River bike path and the confusion of who to call and what department or agency. They also noted that the issues along the Bike Path from crime and homeless have been having an impact on local businesses and residents along the path.

They are organized into neighbors that help keep daily watch on the path and neighbors that come together to clean and maintain the path. Since they started their work, they have helped to develop a numbering sign along the lamp posts of the path, hosted 25 tours, 55 monthly walks and clean-ups, collected 440 bags of trash, numbered 125 lampposts, and been featured in 10 media posts. They support the MRCA taking over maintenance and operation of the River per CD 3’s motion.

Summary of Questions and Comments:
  - Ms. Weintraub thanked the group for all their tremendous work and accomplishments which are extraordinary.
  - Ms. Weintraub asked for staff from the City and County to get together and talk about creating a resident advisory group to help discuss and find solutions for operation and maintenance along the river.

Agency Updates
  - City of Los Angeles (Michael Affeldt, Deborah Weintraub)
    - Taylor Yard G2 River Park Project Update: BOE is completing the Implementation Feasibility Report for Taylor Yard. The document will be public in the next few months and summarizes the information gained from the two years of work on the site including the Site Assessment, Public Outreach, and Conceptual Design.
    - River-adjacent Parks Update:
      - The PARC project designs are 90% complete and will start construction when the 6th Street Viaduct Construction is nearing its end which is approximately end of 2022.
      - River bridges update:
        - North Atwater Multi-Modal Bridge Ribbon Cutting anticipated to open this winter in 2020
        - Red Car Pedestrian Bridge (Glendale/Hyperion Phase I) completion anticipated to open January 25, 2020
        - Taylor Yard Bikeway/Pedestrian Bridge: Under Construction and anticipated completion March 2021
State Water Board LA River Flow Study: The City, represented by Mayor's Office LARiverWorks and DWP, is participating in the Steering Committee of the study being completed by SCCWRP. The study is underway and moving forward with development of its model to evaluate the various flow scenarios for various habitats.

The City is working with the USACE on a P3 Pilot Program to increase the speed and reduce the risk of delivering the River Ecosystem Restoration Project.

The City is Collaborating with the Council for Watershed Health, USBR, and other partners on an in-channel habitat study for a portion of the LA River between the Arroyo Seco and Washington Blvd that received funding from the California Wildlife Conservation Board for the project.

The City will begin design, permitting and environmental analysis on the North Atwater East Bank Riverway from Los Feliz to the 134 Freeway in the coming months and is looking forward to working with the County and the Corps on the project with a grant from the Urban Greening Grant from the Natural Resources Agency.

Los Angeles County Flood Control District (Ernesto Rivera)

LA River Master Plan update: The last steering committee meeting was held on December 12, 2019 and subcommittee meeting on December 17, 2019 where the key issues discussed were implementation, resiliency, adaptation, and the new signage guidelines. The first draft of the document will be provided to the committee members this week and a full public review release in May 2020.

Update on precipitation: Seven inches of rain so far this water year in downtown LA allowing the capture of 18,000 acre-feet of stormwater, which is enough to supply 144,000 residents.

Prior to the rain season we had a number of large fires this year including the Tick, Saddle Ridge, and Getty Fires and last year the Woolsey Fire. The LA County Flood Control District has provided communities and other cities advice for managing mudflow and there is a hotline for additional information for residents at 1-800-675-help, if they want more advice or information. They also removed 50,000 cubic yards of sediment from debris basins in anticipation of this year’s storm season.

Safe Clean Water Program: The call for projects closed on December 15 and the district is now reviewing the applications for completeness and the committees will then review the applications and each project with the goal that by the end of the June 30 the Board of Supervisors will approve the projects.

Call for Projects for Future Meetings
Ms. Weintraub announced applications for LARCC for the April 6, 2020 meeting and applications are requested by February 15, 2020.

Next Meeting:
The next LARCC meeting will be hosted by the County on Monday, April 6, 2020, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm, LA County Department of Public Works, 900 S. Fremont Avenue, Alhambra, CA 91803 (Room TBD).

Closing Comments
Deborah Weintraub thanked all Committee members and attendees for their participation and adjourned the meeting.