



Date and Time June 25, 2020
Meeting Location Public Works Building, 7th Floor Executive Conference Room
Meeting Topic Stakeholder Working Group Meeting #8
Project Silver Lake Reservoir Complex Master Plan
Prepared by Marc Salette

ATTENDEES

AFFILIATION	ABB.	NAME	TITLE
Bureau of Engineering		Mary Nemick	Director of Communications
		Deborah Weintraub	Chief Deputy City Engineer
Council District 13	CD13	Christine Peters	Policy Deputy
Council District 4	CD4	Rachel Fox	Field Deputy
Los Angeles Department of Water & Power	LADWP	Christine Truong	Environmental Engineering Associate
		Dawn Cotterell	Senior Public Relations Specialist
Hargreaves Associates	HAR	Meghen Quinn	Principal
Chee Salette	CS	Marc Salette	Community Liaison
The Robert Group	TRG	Isaiah Ford	Project Manager
Silver Lake Neighborhood Council	SLNC	Sarah Ullman	Representative
Silver Lake Reservoirs Conservancy	SLRC	Leslie Edmonds	Representative
		Andrew Thomas	Representative
Silver Lake Forward	SLF	Elaine Roark	Representative
		Rick Corsini	Representative
Silver Lake Now	SLN	Andrea Horwath	Representative
		Jill Cordes	Representative
Silver Lake Wildlife Sanctuary	SLWS	Mike Krose	Representative
		Janis Purins	Representative

See Minutes attached

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#	CATEGORY, TOPIC, Item	Action
1	INTRODUCTIONS	
1.1	INTRODUCTION OF HR&A	
1.1.1	HR&A presented its expertise and experience in Parks Economics & Implementation, including the development of funding strategies and business planning of O&M budgeting and governance (see Presentation attached).	
1.1.2	SLWS asked if HR&A has experience with the funding of a neighborhood park. HR&A gave the example of Stuyvesant Park in New York City.	
1.2	FUNDING CONTEXT	
1.2.1	BOE explained that the department of Recreation & Parks is overwhelmed, and a different funding strategy to build and operate the proposed Master Plan needs to be developed.	
1.2.2	SLF commented that balancing governmental control and the need for private funding is part of all projects of this type.	
1.2.3	SLNC and SLF emphasized that portions of the Silver Lake neighborhood and the surrounding city are densely populated, and that issues of social equity should not be lost in the funding discussion.	
2	SCHEDULE UPDATE	
2.1	MASTER PLAN SCHEDULE	
2.1.1	Due to the pandemic, the project's community engagement work is slightly behind schedule as there will be a bigger gap than intended until the final community workshop CW#5 (see 3.)	
2.1.2	Tasks III, Community Outreach, and Task V, Draft Master Plan Document, are nearing completion. CW#5 is currently penciled in for August.	
2.1.3	Task VII, Grant Applications, is under way, and Task VIII, Park Economics, has just started.	
2.1.4	Task VI, Final Master Plan Document, will start in July.	
2.1.5	See Presentation attached for the complete calendar.	
3	VIRTUAL COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #5 & OUTREACH	
3.1	VIDEO	
3.1.1	A video will be produced to re-introduce the project, describe the community outreach process to date and present the design.	
3.1.2	The Stakeholders were asked to make one of their representatives available to participate in the video via an interview.	SWG
3.2	ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE TOPICS	

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3.2.1	The project team is developing a final questionnaire to accompany the video. The intent of this questionnaire is to get feedback on topics related to Master Plan implementation such as prioritizing project phasing and perhaps funding strategies.	
3.2.2	Implementation priorities: questions that ask participates to pick their top 3 priorities.	
3.2.3	Funding: questions that assess participant support of funding options including, a modest tax assessment on nearby properties (see 3.3), potential funding partnerships, and park operations entity.	
3.3	DISCUSSION OF TAX ASSESSMENT QUESTION	
3.3.1	SLRC believes that the proposed question is potentially divisive and will provoke negative and narrow-minded responses. SLRC noted that if the belief is that the park should be a city-wide benefit and, as such, should not be funded at a greater extent by the adjacent properties.	
3.3.2	HR&A pointed out that the question should be worded to suggest that a neighborhood tax would be one of a multitude of funding sources, not the only funding mechanism.	
3.3.3	SLNC agrees that the question will be controversial and asked if the potential increase in surrounding property value due to the SLRC improvements has been studied, suggesting that it may go up.	
3.3.4	HR&A agreed that this type of analysis can often be useful. However its use is limited in California, making it harder to make a specific case. HR&A agrees that a connection between the improvements and a potential increase in neighborhood property values should be made clear.	
3.3.5	SLF underlined the importance of the points made earlier and emphasized that the creation of an improvement district can be an important tool in the funding tool box, though its efficacy is limited by Prop 13. SLF points out that, while increased property values should be factored in, an increased stake in the governance and use of the park by neighborhood residents would not be fair.	
3.3.6	SLWS said that the idea of a tax assessment was discussed when the reservoirs were drained but there was no talk of a "quid pro quo" at the time.	
3.3.7	HJ suggested that the questions be framed as part of a menu of options.	
3.3.8	BOE summarized that the City's ability to fund the project is very limited at this time, and that the funding challenge will extend beyond the pandemic. The menu of options may be the best approach. The purpose of the question is to find out if there is an appetite for the tax assessment in the neighborhood, which would still need to be approved through a public vote. The menu should include an order of priorities.	
3.3.9	SLF asked how the Echo Park Lake improvement project was funded. BOE explained that it was funded by the Clean Water Bond and there was no local tax assessment.	
3.3.10	SLF indicated its support for a minor tax. SLF agrees with BOE that it is an important potential funding source but also agrees with the SLNC that it may give a special sense of ownership.	
3.3.11	SLF believes that it is important to raise the issue; the question is how it should be framed. SLWS cautions there will be push back on a tax assessment and that the team should be ready for this.	

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3.3.12	BOE asked if it would be helpful to define the potential tax amount. SLWS agrees that it would, stating that negative feedback was expressed through past surveys when not enough context was given.	
3.3.13	HR&A reiterated that the goal of the question is to assess the general sentiment of the community.	
3.4	OUTREACH SCHEDULE	
3.4.1	The virtual CW#5 date is still to be confirmed.	HJ
3.4.2	HJ asked the group if flyers should be printed. The reponse was no.	
3.4.3	Interviews for the video will take take in early July. The video is scheduled to be online at the end of July.	
3.4.4	Banners will be installed on the fence, as was done for previous workshops.	
3.5	PROJECT PAMPHLET	
3.5.1	A pamphlet will be created to present the present the project (see Presentation attached for the proposed layout).	
3.5.2	HJ explained that the target audience includes potential donors and partners.	
3.5.3	SLWS suggests that it be letter size so people can print it at home.	
4	DRAFT MASTER PLAN REPORT	
4.1	CITY REVIEW	
4.1.1	The Draft Report was submitted in April for review by 30 City departments. Generally positive and minimal comments were provided by the various departments.	
4.1.2	The comments are in the process of being addressed by the Design Team.	
4.2	CHAPTER 1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
	See Presentation attached.	
5	OTHER PROJECT UPDATES	
5.1	CULTURAL HERITAGE SUB-COMMITTEE	
5.1.1	The sub-committee originally took exception to the floating islands and their potential impact of a defining feature of the reservoirs, the wide expanse of open water.	
5.1.2	A site walk was organized for the sub-committee members in May who saw that the islands would have a minimal impact amd withdrew their objections.	
5.1.3	The next step is to give an update to the full Commission (to be scheduled).	HJ
5.2	WATER QUALITY MODEL	
5.2.1	The study looked at the Echo Park Lake precedent for supported wetlands.	
5.2.2	The study included four scenarios:	

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5.2.3	Scenario 1, Isolation Baseline, considers only precipitation and the existing bird population.	
5.2.4	Scenario 2, Existing Baseline, adds the contribution of the Pollock Well.	
5.2.5	Scenario 3, DWP Project Baseline, factors in the impact of the stormwater capture and the introduction of aeration/recirculation.	
5.2.6	Scenario 4, MP, layers in the impact of the proposed wetlands.	
5.2.7	Four key water quality indicators were tracked: nitrogen (too much can cause algae growth), phosphorus (same), chlorophyll-a (directly related to algae amount), and algae surface area coverage.	
5.2.8	Preliminary results show that the first three scenarios lead to declining water quality over time. Only Scenario 4 improves water quality and maintains acceptable pollutant limits in the long run.	
5.3	GRANT FUNDING	
5.3.1	See priorities defined in the Presentation attached.	
5.3.2	SLWS asked what drives the priorities of potential grant funding sources, and how they fall within the City's priorities.	
5.3.3	BOE reiterated that overall City needs are very large and this project needs the help of the stakeholders. An approved Master Plan will help with potential public funds.	
5.3.4	SLWS inquired what the projected completion date is for the DWP improvement project, and suggested that this information be provided during CW#5. DWP will provide.	DWP
5.3.5	SLF recommended that rough construction phase durations be provided, and asked how long construction would take if all was built at the same time. BOE answered 2 years.	
5.3.6	HJ responded that the overall project time is estimated at 4 to 5 years (in a single phase) including the EIR process and funding.	
5.3.7	SLNC also asked that the construction timeline be clarified.	
5.3.8	SLF suggested that a differentiation be made between pre-construction and construction time frames.	
5.3.9	SLNC reminded the group that the creation of the existing Meadow and path was a 10-year project.	
5.4	COST ESTIMATE	
5.4.1	A conceptual cost estimate is under development and includes all project capital funding costs.	
5.4.2	It includes a design contingency.	
5.4.3	It assumes that coffer dams will be used to avoid draining the reservoirs.	
5.4.4	It assumes that the construction methods used will be quieter than normal.	
5.4.5	It excludes operating costs.	
5.4.6	The estimate is broken down into the main pieces/phases of the Master Plan. The Meadow is the largest piece. The team is currently working on further itemizing the estimate.	
5.4.7	SLF commented that the estimated cost makes sense.	

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5.4.8	SLWS asked if there is a recommended phasing sequence. BOE explained that the phases are meant to be able to be implemented independently, allowing the phasing sequence to be driven by funding availability and community priorities.	
5.4.9	SLWS asked if savings could be achieved by building all phases concurrently. HJ replied that there could be, although this is already partially factored into the proposed groupings.	
5.4.9	SLF asked if escalation between phases has been factored in. HJ explained that an escalation factor has been applied equally to all phases and suggested that the most expensive phases be built first, from a cost standpoint.	
5.4.10	SLWS inquired about phase-targeted funding. BOE explained that certain grant sources may be associated with specific phases, areas and elements of the plan (water quality, education, etc.).	
5.4.12	SLWS recommended that potential operating costs be included, and that wildlife monitoring should be part of it. HJ confirmed that that operating costs including oversight will be in the final report.	
5.5	OTHER THOUGHTS	
5.5.1	SLWS asked if there will be a community outreach process for each specific phase. HJ confirmed that each specific project will require its own EIR and community consultation.	
5.5.2	SLWS wondered if the community will want the "Say their Names" monument to remain in some fashion as part of the reservoirs legacy.	
5.5.3	HJ and CS commented that the pandemic period and the monument have evolved the perception of the reservoir complex as a civic space.	
5.5.4	SLNC added that the community's civic awareness has been expanded in these times, and that the Master Plan is an opportunity to build on this. The candlelight vigil was an extraordinary moment that we should not let go. With the pandemic, communal walking has been elevated and the reservoir complex has become a topic of civic discourse. The monument is about how we move around it.	
5.5.5	SLF agreed that the complex has become a true civic space, which is not often the case for a low-density, almost pastoral setting. Communication through the monument and other means is the hallmark of a civic space.	