

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
IRP Steering Group Workshop No. 11
October 28, 2004

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: See Attached

OPENING REMARKS/WELCOME

The Bureau of Sanitation IRP Project Director Adel Hagekhalil welcomed all attendees and thanked Andy Lipkis, President of TreePeople and the IRP team members, for hosting the workshop at the TreePeople's Center for Community Forestry. Adel Hagekhalil introduced the new Assistant Director of the Bureau of Sanitation, Varouj Abkian. Andy Lipkis informed the audience about the Sustainable practices at the Center for Community Forestry. The cups will be washed and reused, and most trash produced from events is compostable. A question was raised asking if there was a way to change the building code so that all new buildings would have to incorporate similar sustainable building practices. Andy Lipkis answered stating that the IRP is trying to change building codes and other policies that conflict with the goals of the IRP, and other groups are advancing sustainable building practices.

REVIEW OF IRP ALTERNATIVES AND RECENT ACTIVITIES

Heather Boyle, CH:CDM IRP Project Manager, reviewed the four draft alternatives:

- Alternative 1 - Hyperion expansion, moderate potential for water resources projects,
- Alternative 2 - Tillman and LAG expansion, high potential for water resources projects,
- Alternative 3 - Tillman expansion, moderate potential for water resources projects, and
- Alternative 4 - Tillman expansion, high potential for water resources projects.

Heather explained the similarities and differences between each alternative.

- For dry weather runoff: all alternatives will:
 - Increase water conservation by installing "smart irrigation,"
 - Divert coastal dry weather runoff to the sewer for treatment, and
 - Treat and reuse dry weather runoff from Ballona Creek and Compton Creek.
- The differences between alternatives for dry weather runoff:
 - Alternative 1 diverts dry weather runoff from Bell Creek, Wilbur Wash, Limekiln Canyon, Caballero Canyon, Bull Creek and Pacoima Wash to the sewer system
 - Alternatives 2 & 4 also treat dry weather runoff from Bell Creek, Wilbur Wash, Limekiln Canyon, Caballero Canyon, Bull Creek and Pacoima Wash through constructed wetlands or urban runoff plants.
- For wet weather runoff: all alternatives include:
 - Neighborhood recharge/percolation of wet weather runoff in vacant lots, parks/open space, abandoned alleys in East Valley (Alts 1, 2 and 4: High Levels; and Alt 3: Medium Level)
- The differences between alternatives for wet weather runoff are:
 - Alternatives 1, 2 and 4 also provide onsite storage/use and onsite percolation at schools and government properties

- Alternatives 1, 2 & 4 also convey wet weather runoff from the West Valley to existing spreading grounds in the East Valley
- For wastewater all alternatives will:
 - Construct three sections of sewer between Eagle Rock and Tillman Plant.
- For Recycled Water, each Alternative is projected to use up to the following quantity for non-potable uses (irrigation & industrial uses):
 - Alternative 1 use up to 42,000 acre-feet per year
 - Alternative 2 use up to 53,000 acre-feet per year
 - Alternative 3 use up to 43,000 acre-feet per year
 - Alternative 4 use up to 56,000 acre-feet per year

Several Steering Group members asked questions and made comments during the review of the alternatives. They included:

Abandoned alleys/Surplus Properties

1. What is an abandoned alley?

City Response: They are alleys that are closed to the public for security or other reasons.

2. The City is proposing to sell surplus property that could be used for parks and runoff management projects.

City Response: The Stormwater program currently has severe budget restraints. Hopefully if Proposition “O” passes, it will open up funds for acquiring property for runoff management projects. These options need to be discussed further.

3. It would be better to acquire under-utilized or surplus property now than to have to purchase it in the future.

4. The City should manage surplus property rather than selling it.

City Response: We would have to consult with the City’s Asset Management Group on this issue.

5. Alleys that have been abandoned become part of private property so you need to consider property owner’s rights and flooding issues when recommending runoff management projects in alleys.

Wet Weather Volume

6. How much water are we talking about managing in wet weather?

City Response: During the wet weather, Alternatives 1, 2 & 4 will manage 47% of runoff from the first ½-inch of a storm, that is 1,700 million gallons per day (mgd) so about 800 mgd (47% x 1,700mgd). Alternative 3 will manage 39% of runoff from the first ½-inch of a storm (1,700 million gallons per day) so about 633 mgd (39% x 1,700mgd).

7. What percent of rain that falls is runoff (90%)?

City Response: That depends on the intensity of the rain event, and how saturated the soil is at the time of the event. The greater the amount of development and the fewer areas for rainwater to infiltrate will increase the amount of runoff. However, our goal is to minimize runoff.

8. What is the maximum runoff you can capture?

City Response: We have assumed up to about 30 to 45 % of a ½ inch storm event.

- 9. About 90% of the San Gabriel River runoff is captured. There should be a similar goal for the Los Angeles River.**

City Response: The runoff management goals for the IRP are goals that we think are obtainable. However, regulations and oversight committees will dictate where projects get implemented.

Recycled Water for Groundwater Recharge

- 10. Are any alternatives recommending a “Toilet-to-Tap” type of project?**

City Response: No. At this time, groundwater recharge of recycled water is not an option. We will continue to track progress of technology and public opinion to determine if a groundwater recharge project is feasible in the future. We will continue to collaboratively work with sister agencies, professional organizations and community stakeholders to monitor the latest advances in water quality improvement technology, review treatment effectiveness and water quality information, address community concerns and identify additional opportunities for efficient management of water resources. Additionally, a recent article in the paper described a groundwater recharge with recycled water project that Orange County is moving forward with.

- 11. If the IRP is going to plan to use a “Toilet-to-Tap” type of project in the future, it should be part of the EIR.**
- 12. Los Angeles County has used recycled water for groundwater recharge in Whittier for 30 years with no health risks. The City should have moved forward with the East Valley Water Recycling project.**
- 13. Daily News misstated the facts again regarding groundwater recharge and the IRP.**
- 14. This committee can provide good science to look at the safety of “Toilet-to-Tap” issue.**
- 15. If the option of using recycled water for groundwater recharge is not included, the validity of the EIR must be questioned.**
- 16. The Daily News should be reporting that there are 80,000 to 100,000 private septic tanks filtering through the soil in Los Angeles.**
- 17. We are here to give you our views and to get answers so give us the answers about the future of “Toilet-to-Tap” projects.**
- City Response: The current City policy regarding recycled water is that there will be no indirect potable use of recycled water; therefore, potable use of recycled water is not an option in the IRP. Beyond the IRP, our goal is to continue dialogue about groundwater recharge projects, similar to the project in Orange County.
- 18. We should use the groundwater recharge of recycled water project in Whittier to promote “Toilet-to-Tap” projects in the City of Los Angeles.**

The recent activities relating to the IRP were also briefly reviewed and they include:

- Environmental Impact Report
 - Mailed Notice of Preparation (NOP)
 - Held Scoping Meeting(s) (July 28, 2004)
 - Developing Project Description
- Implementation
 - Funding – Proposition O Bond Measure

- Interdepartmental Coordination Committees (and Subcommittees)
- Sustainability Analysis by USC

SUSTAINABILITY

The City asked professors from the USC Center for Sustainable Cities to conduct an independent sustainability analysis of the City’s program and the IRP alternatives. Joseph Devinny, PhD, and Robert Vos, PhD from the sustainability analysis team reported the progress of the sustainability analysis of the IRP alternatives.

Sustainability was defined as a combination of three equal parts (sides) – Economy, Society, & Ecology. The purpose of sustainability analysis for the IRP was described:

- To independently assess the sustainability of the IRP alternatives to guide the City in pursuing programs for the long-term social, economic, and environmental welfare of the community.
- To emphasize long-term issues
- To move beyond regulatory compliance
- To evaluate Baseline (2003) and Future (with IRP alternatives) (2020)
- To allow for future periodic use and tracking of progress

The following chart was shown to describe how sustainability analysis results were represented:

	Strong Positive Trend: Analysis indicates substantial progress will be made towards sustainability over the baseline.
	Positive Trend: Analysis indicates some progress will be made towards sustainability over the baseline.
	Same as Baseline: Analysis indicates future outcomes are likely to be equivalent to the baseline (no deterioration).
	Negative Trend: Analysis indicates future deterioration from the baseline.
	Additional Planning Needed: Analysis indicates that additional planning is necessary to estimate progress against the baseline.
	Insufficient Data: There are currently insufficient data or models to measure baselines or outcomes reliably.

The Indicators Framework was introduced, and the results of each of the four IRP alternatives were reported for the 7 indicators shown below (please refer to the slide handouts for the results):

1. Social Impacts
2. Economic Development
3. Natural Resource Consumption
4. Environmental Pollution
5. Urban Ecology
6. System Adaptability and Flexibility
7. Institutional Capacity

It was reported that additional planning is needed to analyze the IRP alternatives with respect to Public Education:

- No performance measures on education in the IRP
- A strategic plan on education was outside the scope of the IRP
- Education need not be outside the scope of capital improvement project (e.g., museum facilities exist in other cities)
- Partnerships with non-profits and with the DWP hold great promise

Summing Up

It was conveyed that sustainability has become part of the planning process and:

- For the first time in a major infrastructure planning project, sustainability has been made an explicit part of planning
- A baseline has now been defined and can be used for tracking sustainability
- This assessment will guide progress towards sustainability during implementation
- Some indicators are the same for all four alternatives
- Some uncertainty remains in sustainability performance—data are insufficient in some areas

The summary of what the indicators tell us was presented. In evaluating alternatives in terms of sustainability, it depends on priorities:

- For reduced total water use, more stormwater management and treatment, and reduced environmental justice impacts from siting:
 - Alternative 4 (followed closely by Alternative 2) performed better
- For open space benefits, and reduced natural resource consumption and pollution:
 - Alternative 3 performed better

It was reported that sustainability analysis is not complete yet, and there is more to do:

- Address missing data and areas where more planning is needed
- Consider sensitivity analysis during implementation
- Maintain stakeholder involvement in implementation
- For continuous improvement, these indicators can track progress along the road to sustainability.

The questions asked and comments made during the Sustainability Analysis portion of the presentation were:

- 1. Concerns with degradation of Compton Creek between 1930's to now. We need short term improvements rather than addressing the issue 20 years out.**
- 2. If the priority is on open space benefits and reduced natural resource consumption and pollution, why does Alternative 3 perform better in sustainability? Alternative 3 has more infrastructure so how is this translated into open space?**

City Response: Alternative 3 has higher amount of acreage. There is more open space for stormwater infiltration, but less infiltration in schools and other government property.

- 3. It seems that all alternatives score the same on sustainability. Is there a way to add indicators or quantify the data so a clear winner could be determined?**

City Response: We discourage the use of the sustainability analysis to choose which alternative is best because it is based on your priorities. The EIR is the process to

evaluate the environmental aspects of the alternatives. The sustainability analysis was used as a check to evaluate how we can be more sustainable in the future.

4. Are we going to get a copy of the Sustainability Report when it has been completed?

The audience was asked to sign-up if they wanted to receive a copy of the Sustainability Report when it is finalized (sometime in the Spring 2005). *If you would like to be added to the list, please contact Reina Pereira at (323) 342-6251 or rppereira@san.lacity.org*

TREEPEOPLE CENTER FOR COMMUNITY FORESTRY TOUR

Andy Lipkis, President of TreePeople, gave a tour of TreePeople's Center for Community Forestry, where he discussed the stormwater storage, treatment and reuse properties of the facility. He also reported that the facility was designed to achieve a Platinum rating from Leaders in Energy and Environmental Design (LEEDs) program. Mr. Lipkis also discussed the landscaping considerations and future use/expansion of the facility.

PROPOSITION O FUNDING BRIEFING

Everyone was reminded about the bond measure on the City of Los Angeles November 2, 2004 General Election ballot that would provide funding for the City's stormwater program that if passed would help fund IRP projects. The bond measure is called City of Los Angeles Bond Proposition O, Clean Water, Ocean, River, Beach, Bay Storm Water Cleanup Measure General Obligation Bonds. A Voter Information Pamphlet for Proposition O was made available to the audience.

The meeting concluded with Andy Lipkis responding to questions about the Center for Community Forestry facility while lunch was served.

A suggestion was made to have the next workshop in the South Los Angeles or Downtown Los Angeles area.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A - Steering Group Attendance list
- Attachment B – Staff Attendance list