

Date: 1-14-09
Submitted in Rules Committee
Council File No: 08-3251
Item No. 3
Deputy: P. Lathmore

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 14, 2009
TO: RULES AND GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
FROM: COUNCILMEMBER ED REYES *EPR*
**RE: ITEM #3, PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA'S PROPOSED
ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE**

The Council has a historic opportunity to transition Los Angeles into a world class green city by presenting our water resources projects as part of a comprehensive watershed management vision to Congress. I would like your support for categorizing/adding a Los Angeles watershed management and Los Angeles River Implementation program that comprehensively and systematically addresses water supply, water conservation, water recycling, water quality, flood management, and river revitalization to the economic stimulus package list. These projects must work together as building blocks essential to the City's public infrastructure, growth, and future development.

River advocates, thousands of watershed supporters, and even the Los Angeles Times now realize that we must advocate for investment in cost-effective, 21st century green infrastructure solutions and restoration projects that generate jobs and improve water quality and natural flood protection. Per a recent analysis in the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master plan approved by Council in 2007, revitalization of just two target reaches of the river can yield an additional:

New Jobs Created	10, 900
Annual Wages Earned	\$ 507,000,000
Annual Sales Revenue	\$ 15,000,000
Annual Property Tax Rev.	\$ 48,200,000

Clean water infrastructure funding should be dedicated to green infrastructure projects to restore urban rivers, wetlands, and natural floodplains; plant urban forests; install green roofs; and transition to green streets. We need to look at this package as a comprehensive system, not through a piecemeal approach. At the end of day, we must leave a legacy of a renewed ecologically functioning city.

Green jobs in urban river revitalization and restoration include:

- Construction
- Engineering

- Biologists
- Habitat specialists
- Watershed resource specialists
- Water quality monitoring
- Landscape designers
- Maintenance/trail/ rehabilitation

As for the river projects on the list, they are viewed as stand alone projects - which could be funded or not. There is nothing tying them together to achieve our larger vision. The Bureau of Engineering should begin preparing a comprehensive phasing of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan that would include as a first phase the projects that are currently on the stimulus list before you today:

- LA Riverfront Park – CD2
- LA Riverfront Park Phase II – CD5
- North Atwater Park Expansion – CD4
- Tampa, Vanowen, Winnetka bridges – CD3
- LA River bikeway, solar improvements (various projects)
- Water recycling (various projects)
- Water supply (various projects)
- Water conservation (various projects)
- Water quality (various projects)

Future phases for implementation would be determined by the Bureau of Engineering consistent with the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan and in consultation with the various agencies involved in implementation of the plan.

Currently there is a Riverkeepers program in place that has already created local jobs. We could immediately expand this project to work directly with the US Army Corps of Engineers to reduce the backlog of critical maintenance and repairs along the Los Angeles River and tributaries. The project addresses the restoration of crucial ecosystems in the Los Angeles watershed to a more natural state in the channel. The expansion of the Riverkeepers would cover over 20 miles of river system. In addition, the project hires at risk adults from local disadvantaged communities.

Riverkeepers Total Project Cost:	\$2.1 Million
Project request:	\$1 Million