


REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: April 22, 2014

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Gerry F. Miller 
Chief Legislative Analyst Council File No: 14-0002-S43
Assignment No: 14-04-0274

SUBJECT: Resolution (O'Farrell - Martinez) to SUPPORT AB 1922 (Gomez)

CLA RECOMMENDATION: Adopt Resolution (O'Farrell - Martinez) to include in the City's 2013-2014 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 1922 (Gomez) which seeks to promote urban greenway development in the state.

SUMMARY:

Resolution (O'Farrell - Martinez), introduced April 11, 2014, states that the Los Angeles River is one of the City's most vital natural resources. It notes that in 2007, the City adopted the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan calling for the revitalization of the River along the City's thirty-two mile stretch. A key objective of the Master Plan is the development of greenways and linear open space corridors along the River.

The Resolution further states that greenways provide recreational open space, flood control benefits, water quality improvements, and improved active transportation between communities.

The Resolution follows that AB 1922, the Greenway Development and Sustainment Act, would promote urban greenways by giving local governments new tools to designate greenway space along river corridors. The measure would also allow local governments to apply for transportation/greenhouse gas reduction funding sources, and land use funds for the development of greenways.

According to the Resolution, AB 1922 would allow the City to implement the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan and would revitalize urban waterways throughout the state. The Resolution therefore requests that the City support AB 1922.

BACKGROUND:

Specifically, AB 1922 defines a greenway as a non-motorized pedestrian, bicycle, and recreational travel corridor that parallels an urban waterway and allows a city, county, or other local governmental entities to designate lands as a greenway; and include a greenway in the local open-space element of a county/city general plan. In addition, the measure allows nonprofit

entities, that focus on greenway development, to acquire and hold conservation easements.

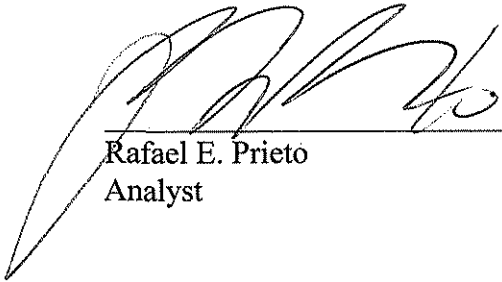
According to the author, the bill will take necessary steps towards greenway development in the state by both defining greenways and ensuring those projects are eligible for critical transportation and land access funds. In addition, the author contends that greenways can improve the quality of life in communities by providing connectivity between them including recreational, open space, and fostering wildlife habitat. Furthermore, greenways promote improved air quality, water quality and urban waterfront redevelopment efforts.

DEPARTMENTS NOTIFIED

Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation
Department of Water and Power

BILL STATUS

2/19/14	Introduced
4/8/14	Referred to the Assembly Committee on Local Government



Rafael E. Prieto
Analyst

Attachment: 1. Resolution (O'Farrell - Martinez)
2. AB 1922

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state, or federal governmental body or agency must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the Los Angeles River is one of the City's most vital natural resources; and

WHEREAS, in 2007, the City adopted the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (C.F. 07-1342), calling for the revitalization of the River along its thirty-two mile stretch within the City; and

WHEREAS, the development of greenways, linear open space corridors along the River, is a key goal of the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, greenways provide recreational open space, flood management, water quality improvements, and improved active transportation connectivity between communities; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of the Interior prioritized the Los Angeles River Trail System as one of two priorities in the State of California in its "50 State Report" on the President's America's Great Outdoors initiative in 2011; and

WHEREAS, Assembly Bill (AB) 1922, the Greenway Development and Sustainment Act (Gomez) would promote urban greenways, like those along the Los Angeles River, by giving local governments new tools to designate lands along a river as a greenway; and

WHEREAS, AB 1922 would also allow local governments to apply for transportation, alternative fuel, greenhouse gas reduction, and other land use funds for the development of greenways; and

WHEREAS, AB 1922 will empower the City to fully implement the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan and will revitalize urban waterways throughout the state.

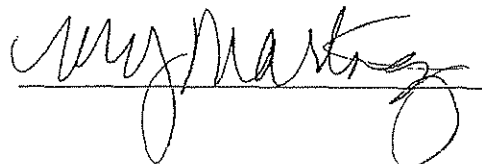
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2013-2014 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 1922 (Gomez) which seeks to promote urban greenway development in the state.

PRESENTED BY:



MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SECONDED BY:



APR 11 2014

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 20, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1922

Introduced by Assembly Member Gomez

February 19, 2014

An act relating to hazardous materials to amend Section 815.3 of the Civil Code, to amend Section 65560 of the Government Code, and to add Chapter 10.5 (commencing with Section 5845) to Division 5 of the Public Resources Code, relating to open-space lands.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1922, as amended, Gomez. ~~Hazardous materials: Los Angeles River revitalization: Greenway Development and Sustainment Act.~~

Existing law establishes various plans and programs intended to preserve, protect, and rehabilitate lands adjacent to rivers in the state.

This bill would enact the Greenway Development and Sustainment Act, which is intended to promote the development of greenways along rivers in the state, including the development of a greenway along the Los Angeles River. The bill would define the term "greenway" for purposes of the bill, and would authorize a city, county, city and county, or other local government entity to designate lands along a river in its jurisdiction, upon approval of its legislative body by ordinance or resolution, or by incorporating such a designation into an adopted general plan element or adopted river master plan, and to apply for public or private funding available for the development of a greenway in its jurisdiction, to be used in a manner consistent with applicable state laws.

Existing law authorizes certain entities and organizations to acquire and hold conservation easements, including tax exempt nonprofit

organizations qualified to do business in this state that has as its primary purpose the preservation, protection, or enhancement of land in its natural, scenic, historical, agricultural, forested, open-space or use.

This bill would also authorize such a tax exempt nonprofit organization to acquire and hold a conservation easement if the organization has as its primary purpose the development of a greenway.

~~Existing law authorizes a local agency, pursuant to specified procedures, to take any action that the local agency determines is necessary, consistent with other state and federal laws, to investigate and clean up a release of hazardous materials in a blighted area within the boundaries of the local agency.~~

~~This bill would declare the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that would encourage the clean up of the Los Angeles River for purposes of redevelopment, restoration, and revitalization.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) *The Legislature hereby finds and declares*
2 *all of the following:*
- 3 (1) *Open-space land is necessary not only for the maintenance*
4 *of the economy of the state, but for, among other purposes, the*
5 *enjoyment of scenic beauty, recreation, and the use and*
6 *preservation of natural resources. Moreover, the growing*
7 *population of the state makes it important that existing open-space*
8 *resources be preserved and well maintained, and that access to*
9 *those resources be ensured for the health benefits and well-being*
10 *of the state's population. The preservation of open-space land is*
11 *especially critical in urban areas where the amount of usable*
12 *open-space land is limited.*
- 13 (2) *Open-space land provides relief from the effects of urban*
14 *congestion and opportunities for relaxation, exercise, community*
15 *interaction, and the observation and appreciation of wildlife, which*
16 *helps to combat both physical and psychological stress. Trees*
17 *located on open-space land also provide shade and help reduce*
18 *ambient temperatures and restore oxygen to the atmosphere.*
- 19 (3) *Greenways are public infrastructure located along natural*
20 *landscape features such as urban watercourses, which, because*
21 *of their linear structure, help to physically and psychologically*

1 connect various neighborhoods with one another while providing
2 a means of habitat connectivity.

3 (4) Greenways can directly improve the quality of life in
4 communities by providing important recreational, open-space
5 land, wildlife, flood management, water quality, air quality,
6 transportation, emergency response, and urban waterfront
7 revitalization benefits to those communities.

8 (5) Greenways can foster livable communities by utilizing public
9 lands for multiple, complementary purposes, such as placemaking,
10 connecting diverse communities, reducing dependence on
11 automobiles, expanding nonmotorized transportation networks
12 with safer routes to jobs, homes, and schools, encouraging more
13 transit-oriented development, and facilitating healthier behaviors
14 by providing opportunities for exercise and the maintenance of a
15 healthy, active lifestyle.

16 (6) Greenways can be complemented and enhanced by installing
17 public amenities and public-serving retail and services that provide
18 additional access to historically underserved urban communities.
19 Greenways also attract residents and visitors, and increase public
20 safety by fostering improved civic vigilance. Other public-private
21 partnerships in greenways in cities throughout the world have
22 demonstrated the effectiveness and benefits of sustainable and
23 successful public-private partnerships.

24 (7) Greenways encourage healthier residential communities by
25 facilitating development that allows people to live closer to job
26 centers and use public transportation alternatives.

27 (8) Greenways reduce the amount of parking necessary for
28 small businesses because of reduced automobile traffic, encourage
29 the development of affordable housing in urban areas, and promote
30 walking and cycling and increased community interaction.

31 (9) Greenways encourage economic investment and community
32 revitalization by connecting people in new ways.

33 (b) The Legislature finds and declares the following with regard
34 to the development of a greenway along the Los Angeles River:

35 (1) The Los Angeles River is a site that is particularly suited
36 for the development of a greenway. A Los Angeles River greenway
37 that focuses on public-private partnerships aimed at establishing
38 a continuous pedestrian bikeway along the Los Angeles River and
39 its key tributaries would foster job creation, economic development,
40 and community revitalization.