

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR LINDSEY P. HORVATH

April 9, 2024

Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park Project Site Improvements

The Rory M. Shaw Wetlands Park (Rory Shaw) Project is located in the community of Sun Valley in the City of Los Angeles. Los Angeles County, the City of Los Angeles, and the Sun Valley Watershed Stakeholders Group collaborated to develop the Sun Valley Watershed Management Plan, which aims to solve chronic watershed issues through multi-benefit [projects](#). Rory Shaw was identified as one of the keystone projects in the Sun Valley Watershed Management Plan. The Project’s objectives are to mitigate local flood risk and reduce stormwater pollution, while increasing water conservation, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat by converting a 46-acre inert debris landfill into a multi-benefit park. The park will feature a 21-acre detention pond that will collect stormwater runoff from the upstream tributary area via a proposed 4.75-mile-long storm drain system. The captured stormwater in the detention pond will then enter a 10-acre wetland that will act as a natural water treatment system by removing pollutants from the water. In addition, the wetlands will form a sustainable habitat for various plant and animal species. The treated stormwater will then be pumped to the existing Sun Valley Park infiltration basins for groundwater recharge. Additionally, this multi-benefit

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project provides 15-acres of much needed open space and recreational amenities for the community. Upon completion, the park will be turned over to the City of Los Angeles for ownership, operations, and maintenance. However, the 21-acre detention pond and storm drain system will be maintained by Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Flood Control District.

The planning for the Project was initiated in the early 2000's after the adoption of the Sun Valley Watershed Management Plan. However, site investigations and environmental studies could not be conducted until after the adjacent land acquisition was completed in 2012. These studies were necessary to ensure the Project design was well-informed and robust. Public Works recently finalized the plans, specifications, and engineer's estimate for the necessary grading and site preparation needed prior to the construction of the park features. Due to the complexity of converting an inert debris landfill into a multi-benefit park, as well as inflation, the construction cost has significantly increased and is now estimated to be over \$200 million. As such, there is currently insufficient funding available to move the Project in total to construction. To date, Public Works has secured \$10 million through a Safe, Clean Water Regional Program grant. Additionally, \$17.8 million has been earmarked through the City of Los Angeles' Proposition O Program. To close the funding gap, Public Works is actively pursuing other funding opportunities, including grants and loans.

Over the years, Public Works has conducted routine maintenance at the Project site. However, due to ongoing Project delays, the property has remained vacant and is subject to illegal dumping, illicit activities, and encampments from people experiencing homelessness, with most of these issues crossing both City and County right-of-way.

While Public Works is proactively monitoring and addressing site maintenance, additional measures are needed, in coordination with the City, to respond more effectively and efficiently to community concerns and lessen the impact of the Project timeline.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors instruct and authorize the Director of Public Works and Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, or his designee, to take the following actions, and provide a written report back in 30-days:

- 1) Identify existing measures and implement new measures to increase security at the site to deter and reduce illegal dumping, fugitive dust, and illicit activities, as well as measures to resolve the encampments by people experiencing homelessness with housing and supportive services. Continue to coordinate closely with the City of Los Angeles to explore additional measures to improve response time and deter issues surrounding the site, which often cross over into both the City and County jurisdictions. Furthermore, enhance existing site maintenance procedures until the Project enters construction, including the status, plan, and schedule for the interim solutions.
- 2) Explore and investigate possible interim greening elements and beautification measures along the site's perimeter to help improve the aesthetics of the site and deter illicit activities and trespassing, including a plan and schedule for the interim solutions.

3) Develop a funding plan to complete the Project through various funding opportunities including loans, revenue bonds, grants, legislation, and potential partnerships with other levels of government.

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