

# **SAFE, CLEAN WATER PROGRAM**

## **Stakeholder Advisory Committee**

### **Meeting Summary: March 14, 2018**

#### **1. MEETING IN BRIEF**

This was the fifth meeting of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) for the Safe, Clean Water Program. The meeting purposes were to:

1. Continue discussion of the Program, including tax methodology and education/outreach efforts to date; and
2. Provide a forum for stakeholders to offer feedback and suggestions on Program content.

The meeting was attended by SAC delegates and alternates, members of the public, and the project team (including County staff and consultants).

The February 14, 2018, SAC meeting summary was approved without change.

Russ Bryden, Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Principal Engineer, reviewed the project team's work to date on the development of a tax formula and ballot measure. He discussed: the Los Angeles County Flood Control District's legal authority to generate revenue for stormwater projects; potential tax formulas reviewed by the project team; the currently anticipated tax formula and the rationale for its selection; preliminary tax revenue targets; sample property tax scenarios; and an example ballot question. The tax formula applies a per-square-foot charge to the impermeable surface area within each lot. SAC members raised questions and provided comment about this approach.

Jared Boigon, TBWB, reviewed the project team's outreach and education efforts to date, including media briefings, public workshops and events, website development, and production of fliers and survey cards. SAC members provided suggestions and comments on how to expand and improve these efforts.

Katy Young, Los Angeles County Supervisorial District 3, reviewed the team's plans for preparation of a full draft Program framework by mid to late April that considers all input from subcommittees and stakeholder groups. In order to provide sufficient time for project team review of subcommittee straw proposals and preparation of a full draft, the team proposed cancelling the April SAC meeting and rescheduling subcommittee meetings from the first to second week of April. The next round of subcommittee meetings will include combined discussion of related topics.

During a round table discussion, SAC members had opportunity to state their respective priorities regarding the development of the Safe, Clean Water Program.

SAC members were encouraged to submit further written comments via [www.safecleanwaterla.org](http://www.safecleanwaterla.org).

## 2. ACTION ITEMS

**ACTION ITEM:** The project team will notify SAC and subcommittee members of the revised April meeting schedule.

## 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Meghan Sahli-Wells, Westside Cities Council of Governments (COG)
  - If the proposed measure raises sufficient funding to fully address compliance, local taxes could be removed to avoid double taxation issues.
  - This program would provide an opportunity for water agencies and management to work together in developing a wholistic approach for attaining water sustainability in Los Angeles County. This would result in a tremendous public benefit.
- Mike Lewis, BizFed
  - Impermeability may not be the best approach for the tax formula. There is ample scientific evidence that the same amount of pollution runs off developed and undeveloped parcels. This approach puts an extra burden on impermeable surfaces and would have an economic effect.
  - Of the funds that would be generated by this program, how much would derive from residential uses as compared to non-residential uses?
  - What percentage of impermeable surfaces do government-owned properties represent? These properties should contribute.
- Eric Wolf, San Gabriel COG
  - Make sure funding is used for compliance to relieve the burden on cities. One previously recommended approach to accomplish this is to weigh water quality at 60%, water supply at 35%, and community enhancement at 5%.
  - Keeping the measure simple will make it easier to implement.
- Lauren Ahkiam, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, Our Water LA Coalition
  - Community investment is more meaningful to residents than community enhancement. Investment addresses climate resilience, community serving purposes, and job creation.
  - Job creation opportunities are important, needed by communities facing water supply issues, and a great way to sell people on this measure.
  - Figure out ways that renters can be protected from displacement due to increased rent.
- Bruce Reznick, Los Angeles Water Keeper, Our Water LA Coalition
  - Compliance, community investment, and multi-benefit are not at odds with each other. They can all be accomplished with the right kind of projects.
  - He agrees with the use of impermeable surfaces in the tax approach. It is important to get as many people involved in paying to solve the problem.

- Alejandro Reyes, San Gabriel Valley Water Company
  - He agrees with the importance of defining impermeability.
  - Challenges of disadvantaged communities must be addressed. They should not subsidize those who are more economically sound and have more green space.
  - Water management agencies and wholesale retailers have a wealth of resources for public outreach and ideas for enhancing multi-benefit watershed projects.

## **4. NEXT STEPS**

The next SAC meeting will be held on May 9, 2018, from 1 to 3 p.m., at the same location (Room 140, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 W. Temple Avenue, Los Angeles). At this meeting the project team will present a full draft Program framework.