

May 11, 2018

TO: Hon. Sheila Kuehl, Chair, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Janice Hahn, Chair Pro Tem, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Hon. Hilda L. Solis, Supervisor, First District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Mark Ridley-Thomas, Supervisor, Second District, Los Angeles County
Hon. Kathryn Barger, Supervisor, Fifth District, Los Angeles County
Mark Pestrella, Director of Public Works, Los Angeles County

RE: Safe, Clean Water Program

Dear Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors,

The Trust for Public Land is committed to working with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to ensure safe and clean water for future generations through a multi-benefit stormwater and urban runoff capture program to increase water supply, improve water quality, and expand investment in communities.

The Trust for Public Land works nationally to protect the places people care about and create close-to-home parks – particularly in and near cities, where 80 percent of Americans live – ensuring livable communities for generations to come. Our urban work strives to improve environmental health in disadvantaged communities and ensure all residents have access to a high-quality park within a 10-minute walk of where they live. Past and future projects include ecologically responsive parks, alley conversions that capture and treat stormwater, and street tree plantings that expand the urban tree canopy.

We write to strongly encourage the Safe, Clean Water Program to prioritize distributed and neighborhood scale, nature-based solutions to capture, infiltrate, treat and use stormwater and dry-weather runoff. Such projects and programs can help achieve a more sustainable and equitable water future for all communities in Los Angeles County.

Funding for nature-based and multi-benefit projects should include different project scales, from retrofitting public alleys, streets and schools, to large regional parks. We also firmly believe it is critically important that these projects be built throughout the region in an equitable way for all residents, with disadvantaged communities receiving targeted funding to make up for a history of racial discrimination and disinvestment. We support Safe, Clean Water Program resources being directed to disadvantaged communities in the amount of 41%, or the amount assessed from those communities, or whichever is greater. Stormwater projects in disadvantaged communities require more costs due the highly urbanized context and history of soil pollution, but we believe they are worth the investment.

We are strongly committed to increasing local water supply to lessen the region's carbon footprint by reducing reliance on imported water and other energy-intensive water strategies. In addition, all projects should strive to reduce pollution and improve the health of waterways, habitat and beaches in the Los Angeles region, and equitable access to those natural treasures.

We appreciate the County of Los Angeles' strong commitment to achieving a safe and clean water future for all residents. We stand ready to work with you on providing input on the Safe, Clean Water Program and to assist with outreach to communities and leaders throughout Los Angeles County.

Sincerely,



Tori Kjer
Los Angeles Program Director
The Trust for Public Land

CC: Safe, Clean Water Program Stakeholder Advisory Committee
Leslie Friedman Johnson, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Rachel Roque, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Kelly Cook, Conservation and Natural Resources Group
Genevieve Osmena, Public Works, Los Angeles County
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board