

# Safe, Clean Water Program

## Upper San Gabriel River

### Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)

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#### **Meeting Minutes:**

Thursday, June 10, 2021

1:00pm - 3:00pm

WebEx Meeting

#### **Attendees**

##### Committee Members Present:

Julian Juarez (LA County Flood Control District)

Patty Cortez\* (Upper San Gabriel District)

Kristen Ruffell (Sanitation Districts)

Clement Lau\* (Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation)

Bob Huff (Huff Strategies)

Drew Ready (Council for Watershed Health)

Ed Reyes / Miguel Luna\* (Ed P. Reyes & Associates)

David Diaz (Active SGV)

John Beshay (Baldwin Park)

Kevin Kearney\* (Duarte)

Alison Sweet (Glendora)

Joshua Nelson (Industry)

Fernando Villaluna\* (LA County)

Julie Carver (Pomona)

Lisa O'Brien (La Verne)

##### Committee Members Not Present:

Kelly Gardner (Main San Gabriel Basin)

Debbie Enos (Watershed Conservation Authority)

\*Committee Member Alternate

See attached attendance report for the full list of attendees.

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Joshua Nelson, Chair of the Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) WASC, called the meeting to order. He discussed WebEx functions and the public comment process. Kevin Kim (District) conducted roll call, and a quorum was established.

### **2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from May 27, 2021**

The District provided a copy of the meeting minutes from the previous meeting. Joshua Nelson asked the Committee members for comments or revisions. Joshua Nelson, Lisa O'Brien, and Julie Carver provided comments and requested an amendment to the minutes. Julie Carver motioned to approve the May 27, 2021 meeting minutes as amended. Lisa O'Brien seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes as amended. (Approved, see vote tracking sheet)

### **3. Committee Member and District Updates**

Kevin Kim (District) provided the District update noting: The Regional Oversight Committee (ROC) is scheduled meet on Tuesday, June 29, 2021, 10AM – 1PM. The agenda will be posted on the SCW Program website and will be focused on the WASC's recommended Stormwater Investments Plans (SIP).

As a reminder the District noted that the Round 3 Call for Projects' deadline is July 31, 2021. The District hosted two informational webinars on May 27, 2021 and June 03, 2021 and noted that the recordings and FAQ will be posted on the Safe, Clean Water Program website.

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Regarding the Watershed Coordinators (WC), 9 out of 12 agreements have been executed. The remaining WCs continue to work with contract staff to meet contract requirements. As for the WC for USGR WASC; Day One are currently finalizing their insurance endorsements/certificates.

#### **4. Watershed Coordinator Updates**

Alfredo Camacho (Day One) commented that they submitted their final insurance certificate for approval. He commented that Day One met with the regional coordinator on how they can commence work upon the notice to proceed. Day One to present their Strategic Outreach Engagement Plan after their contract has been fully executed.

#### **5. Ex Parte Communication Disclosures**

Lisa O'Brien noted to have had general discussions with David Diaz about Redesign LA. She also noted to have had regular conversations with Julie Carver as they are in the same group discussing projects. Julie Carver confirmed discussions with Lisa O'Brien.

#### **6. Public Comment Period**

Jessica Ancona (Mayor of El Monte City) submitted a letter in support of the Zamora Park Project. (see attached)

#### **7. Discussion Items:**

a) Review of WASCs roles and responsibilities

Mike Antos (Stantec) provided an overview of the Safe, Clean Water Program Goals and Policies.

Joshua Nelson asked for clarification on the difference between "shall be programmed" and "shall be prioritized", regarding Regional Program Multi-Benefit Watershed-based Projects. Mike Antos discussed how Nature-based Solutions are prioritized at both the Project and Stormwater Investment Plan levels to the extent feasible. Mike Antos indicated that he will get back to the Committee regarding "shall be programmed" language.

Bob Huff commented on his experience interfacing with the community and noted that Municipalities were rather focused on stormwater compliance for MS4 permitting. Mike Antos added that the earlier efforts to pass this measure which mainly focused on stormwater compliance were resisted by those who were seeking multi-benefit improvements.

Ed P. Reyes commented that he was also on the stakeholder advisory committee with Bob Huff and that he was responsible for interacting with the impoverished Southeast County area. He noted that these areas not only needed to leverage funds for stormwater compliance but also address the quality-of-life issues.

b) Upper San Gabriel River (USGR) Project Prioritization and Selection Discussion for populating the Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan (SCW Portal & USGR Scoring Rubric)

i) Infrastructure Program (IP)

(1) Zamora Park Renovation Project – City of El Monte

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- (2) Lone Hill Park – East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group
  - (3) Washington Park – East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group
  - (4) Fairplex – East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group
  - (5) Larkin Park – East San Gabriel Valley Watershed Management Group
  - (6) Finkbiner Park Stormwater Capture Project – City of Glendora
- ii) Technical Resources Program (TRP)
- (1) Sunset Crossing Park Multi-Benefit Stormwater Project – City of Diamond Bar
- iii) Scientific Studies (SS)
- (1) Regional Pathogen Reduction Study – Gateway Water Management Authority

Regarding the Stormwater Investment Plan (SIP), Kevin Kim (District) discussed the time allotted to discuss and finalize the SIP. He noted that from the previous meeting discussions there were five scenarios saved in the SIP for continued discussion.

Kevin Kim (District) noted that per the previous meeting there were discussions for changing the Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) designation to the Fairplex Project. John Beshay asked if the Fairplex park will be accessible to the public as it is typically gated. Joshua Nelson clarified that the definition for DAC benefits has to do with the community it benefits and not the park's accessibility. Mike Antos noted that the Fairplex Project is not within a DAC Low-Income Block Group but the WASC has the discretion to determine whether the Project will benefit the community of Pomona. Lisa O'Brien noted that the reason the Fairplex project does not fall within a Low-Income Census Blocks is that there are no residents on those grounds.

David Diaz asked how the decision to give the Fairplex project the DAC benefit designation would be considered. Kevin Kim (District) noted that the guidance allows for the WASC to turn off and on the DAC designation during a SIP vote.

John Beshay asked if the Fairplex Project has multiple benefits or if it is limited to those who visit the Fair each year. Julie Carver indicated that the Fairplex will be open year-round if there are no COVID-19 restrictions and that the project's application discusses all the Water Quality and Water Supply benefits to the community that come in to play any time it rains and not just during park open hours.

Drew Ready requested clarification on the Project's drainage area. Joshua Nelson clarified that the drainage area included communities east of the Fairplex. Drew Ready commented that the project involved an existing sports field and asked if there were any new community benefits.

Ed Othmer (Fairplex Project Proponent, Stantec) provided a summary of the benefits noting that there will be educational benefits, a new soccer field, Water Quality benefits in terms of MS4 compliance, and Water Supply benefits. He noted that the Six Basins Watermaster advocated for the Project because of the importance of augmenting the underlying aquifers. Ed Othmer commented that they were very literal with their answer to whether the Fairplex project resided within the DAC GIS area but based on the latest guidance from the SCWP on DAC benefits, this project clearly benefits the local DAC. He also pointed out that the project would treat industrial and commercial areas, so the Water Quality benefit is greater than treating residential areas.

Lisa O'Brien asked for Committee Member feedback on the Scientific Studies (SS). Joshua Nelson responded that the funding scenarios that include the SS would fund \$100k for initial outreach and that there were concerns in the independent review due to lack of detail. He remarked that his thought process

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was to push the rest of the funds to the future to provide flexibility. David Diaz commented that he does not support the SS.

Bob Huff commented that the premise behind the Scientific Studies (SS) was to quantify bacteria to tailor an approach on how to treat it. He asked how much funding should be programmed and noted that maximizing the funding would reduce their ability to program future projects. Joshua Nelson commented that he would like to get as many projects started as some projects will inevitably experience delays. Bob Huff agreed that getting the design work out the way helps the WASC prioritize projects.

Julie Carver commented that the distribution of funds should be in alignment with the Safe, Clean Water Program goals including providing benefits to Municipalities in proportion to the funds generated within their jurisdiction.

Lisa O'Brien commented that there is concentration of funding in the Southeast area of the Watershed. She pointed out that the Lone Hill, Fairplex, and Larkin projects would balance out distribution of funding in proportion to the amount generated. She also noted that Pomona is about half of the Watershed and around 80% is a DAC. She was concerned with the disparity of benefits across the Watershed and making sure funds are distributed fairly.

Bob Huff commented that Municipalities could borrow against future funds and that funding is coming from ongoing tax revenue. Joshua Nelson confirmed that Municipalities could choose to move forward with a project knowing they can be reimbursed in the future.

Mike Antos clarified that it is Municipal benefits not dollars that should be distributed across the Watershed. He noted that the importance of distributing Municipal benefits comes behind DAC benefit allocation.

#### **8. Public Comment**

Dena Florez (Bassett Unified School District Board Member) asked when future meetings would be held to discuss the Bassett Stormwater Project. Kevin Kim (District) responded that Los Angeles County (Project Proponent) would be the best point of contact. Fernando Villaluna confirmed that Los Angeles County Public Works would contact the school district directly for collaborative meetings on the project.

#### **9. Voting Items**

a) Approve the final Fiscal Year 2021-22 Stormwater Investment Plan funding recommendations for the USGR Watershed Area and approve submission to the Regional Oversight Committee for review

Joshua Nelson called for a roll call vote to decide whether the Fairplex project provides benefits to DAC and decide if the Regional Scientific Study should be included in the SIP. The Committee voted to separately approve both (Approved, see vote tracking sheet).

The Committee reviewed multiple funding SIP scenarios before motioning to approve.

David Diaz made a motion to approve the Zamora Park project, Lone Hill project for design only, and Finkbiner Park project, the Sunset Crossing project (TRP), and the Regional Pathogen Study (SS) with delayed funding for the FY21-22 SIP. Drew Ready seconded the motion. Joshua Nelson commented that he was not ready to support that motion. He suggested that the Committee view projects in the SIP from a higher to lower funding request and wanted to ask the Committee if there were plans to fund more projects. Alison Sweet favored the idea of starting with the most expensive funding scenario. Drew Ready

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commented in favor of a more conservative SIP because the WC has not started and have not been able to conduct community engagement to identify projects with significant community investment.

Alison Sweet made a substitute motion to approve the top 5 projects and the Scientific Study including the Zamora Park project, Lone Hill Park project for design only, Fairplex project for design only, Finkbiner Park project, the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study (SS) with delayed funding, and the Sunset Crossing Project (TRP) for the FY21-22 Stormwater Investment Plan. Patty Cortez seconded this motion. A roll call vote was made to replace the main motion made by David Diaz with Alison Sweet's motion to approve the top 5 Projects and the SS for the SIP. The Committee voted to replace the main motion with a substitute motion (Approved, see voting tracker).

Julie Carver made a substitute motion to approve the top 6 projects and the scientific study including the Zamora Park Project with delayed funding, Lone Hill Park Project for design only, Fairplex Project for design only, Larkin Park Project for design only, Finkbiner Park Project, the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study (SS) with delayed funding, and the Sunset Crossing Project (TRP) for the FY21-22 Stormwater Investment Plan. Lisa O'Brien seconded this motion. A roll call vote was made to replace the second main motion made by Alison Sweet with Julie Carver's motion to approve the top 6 Projects and the SS for the SIP. The Committee voted against replacing the main motion with a substitute motion. (Not Approved, see voting tracking sheet).

John Beshay asked David Diaz to amend his motion to include the Larkin Park Project. David Diaz held his motion as is.

John Beshay made a substitute motion to include Zamora Park Project, Lone Hill Park Project, Larkin Park Project, Finkbiner Park Project, the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study, and the Sunset Crossing Project in the SIP. There was no second to the motion.

The Committee then entertained the adopted substitute motion made by Alison Sweet.

The USGR voted to approve the Zamora Park Project, Lone Hill Park Project for design only, Fairplex Project for design only, Finkbiner Park Project, the Regional Pathogen Reduction Study (SS) with delayed funding, and the Sunset Crossing Project (TRP) for the FY21-22 Stormwater Investment Plan. (Approved, see vote tracking sheet)

#### **10. Items for Next Agenda**

- a) Watershed Coordinator Updates
- b) Discuss recommendation from the ROC (if any)

#### **11. Adjournment**

Joshua Nelson thanked the members and the public for their attendance and participation and adjourned the meeting.

**Attendance**  
**USGR WASC - June 10, 2021**

Alexander Iglesias LACFCD	James Cramsie
Alfredo Camacho	Jason Casanova
Alison Sweet	John Beshay
Araceli Hernandez	Johnathan Perisho
Aydin Pasebani	Joshua Nelson
Belen Bernal	Julian J
Bob Huff	Julie Carver
Carlos Moran	Kevin Kim - LACFCD
Chris Jansen	Kevin Kearney
Clarasophia Gust	Kristen Ruffell
Clement Lau	Laura Santos
Cynthia Gabaldon	Lauren Marshall
David Avelar	Lisa O'Brien
Dena Florez	Maritsa DRA Inc.
Drew Ready (CWH)	Miguel Luna
Ed Perez Reyes	Mike Antos
Ed Othmer	Oliver Galang (Craftwater)
Ed Suher, CASC	Patty Cortez
Edna Robidas	Paul Glenn (GHD)
Elizabeth Ruedas	Robin Mark
Enrique Baul	Ryan Kearns - CWE
Fabian Aoun	Ryanna Fossum
Fernando Villaluna	Sharon Gallant
guest guest	Shawn Igoe
I EC	Tori Klug

USGR WASC - June 10, 2021

		Quorum Present				Voting Items (see meeting minutes for additional details)									
											main motion	substitute motion 1		substitute motion 1	substitute motion 2
											David Diaz	Alison Sweet		Alison Sweet	Julie Carver
											Drew Ready	Patty Cortez		Patty Cortez	Lisa O'brien
Member Type	Position	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Approve Amended Meeting Minutes	Fairflex provides benefit to DAC	Includes SS in SIP	adopt substitute motion 1	Top 4 design, SS delay	Top 5 design, SS delay	adopt substitute motion 2	Top 5 design, SS delay	Top 6 design, SS delay, Zamora delay	
Agency	FCD	Julian Juarez	X	Ramy Gindi		Y	Y	N	Y			Y	Y		
Agency	Upper San Gabriel District	Tom Love		Patty Cortez	X	A	Y	Y	Y			N	Y		
Agency	Main San Gabriel Basin	Kelly Gardner		Tony Zampielo											
Agency	Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	X	Martha Tremblay		Y	Y	Y	N			Y	Y		
Agency	Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation	Sean Woods		Clement Lau	X	A	Y	Y	N			N	Y		
Community Stakeholder	Huff Strategies	Bob Huff	X			Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		
Community Stakeholder	Council for Watershed Health	Drew Ready	X			Y	N	N	N			N	N		
Community Stakeholder	Watershed Conservation Authority	Debbie Enos		Jane Tsong											
Community Stakeholder	Ed P. Reyes & Associates	Ed Reyes	X	Miguel Luna	X	A	N	N	N			N	N		
Community Stakeholder	Active SGV	David Diaz	X	Wesley Reutimann		Y	N	N	N			N	N		
Municipal Members	Baldwin Park	John Beshay	X	Sam Gutierrez		A	Y	Y	Y			N	Y		
Municipal Members	Duarte	Amanda Hamilton		Kevin Kearney	X	Y	Y	Y	N			Y	Y		
Municipal Members	Glendora	Alison Sweet	X	Sharon Gallant		Y	Y	Y	Y			N	Y		
Municipal Members	Industry	Joshua Nelson	X	John Di Mario		Y	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y		
Municipal Members	Los Angeles County	Paul Alva		Fernando Villaluna	X	Y	Y	Y	Y			N	Y		
Municipal Members	Pomona	Julie Carver	X	Fabian Aoun		Y	Y	N	Y			Y	Y		
Municipal Members	La Verne	Lisa O'Brien	X	Shari Garwick		Y	Y	N	Y			Y	Y		
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	11	12	9	9	0	0	7	12	0	
Total Voting Members Present		16			Nay (N)	0	3	6	6	0	0	8	3	0	
Agency		4			Abstain (A)	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	15	15	15	15	0	0	15	15	0	
Municipal Members		7			Approved	Approved	Approved	Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved	Not Approved	Approved	Not Approved		





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June 10, 2021

Watershed Area Steering Committee  
Upper San Gabriel River Watershed  
Joshua Nelson, Chair

**Re: Support for the Zamora Park Renovation Project**

Dear Mr. Nelson and members of the Upper San Gabriel River Watershed Area Steering Committee,

My name is Jessica Ancona, proud Mayor of the City of El Monte. I'm writing to express my strong support for the Zamora Park Renovation Project proposal submitted to the Safe Clean Water Program by the City of El Monte.

The renovation of Zamora Park was initiated by community members in 2017 who approached the El Monte City Council and Department of Recreation and Parks to renovate their 50+ year old neighborhood park. Since then over nine community meetings have been held to design the park, with additional meetings held and attended by project staff to inform neighbors and community members about the project.

The Zamora Park Renovation is a multi-benefit project that will address ongoing community access, water quality, and quality of life issues. The park is located in the crowded River East neighborhood of El Monte, a community bounded by the 10 Freeway to the south, 605 Freeway and San Gabriel River to the east, and the major thoroughfares Ramona Boulevard and Peck Road to the north and west. The urban development in this dense area creates high levels of impervious surfaces, leading to ponding water and local flooding, and leaves residents vulnerable to air pollution and urban heat island impacts.

Nearly 16,000 residents live within a half-mile of Zamora Park, and there are no other public green spaces in the community. Zamora Park is underused due to outdated and deteriorating amenities, lack of walking paths, and safety concerns due to inadequate lighting. Park neighbors report driving to parks in other cities just to find outdoor recreation space they feel safe enjoying with their families.

The renovation will transform the 4.48-acre Zamora Park into a multi-benefit green infrastructure project that captures stormwater on site using nature-based solutions that mimic natural stormwater management and infiltration processes by diverting runoff from adjacent impervious areas and roofs into a subterranean infiltration basin, bioswales, and natural planting areas. Updated community-requested amenities like a new playground and splash pad, as well as walking paths and lighting, will draw people into the park and create a safe place to recreate.

The project will add over 100 new trees, as well as shrubs and groundcover where there is currently only turf. All plantings will be native or drought-tolerant, and will not only aid in stormwater capture, but will



also create shade, native habitat, and improve the overall experience of Zamora Park, bringing pride and honor to the community

The project will employ Los Angeles Conservation Corps members, providing job skills training, education, and work experience to young adults 18-25 years old – many of whom come from disadvantaged and severely disadvantaged communities – which lead to industry recognized credentials and certifications, thereby increasing their opportunities for success.

The Zamora Park Renovation Project meets the Safe Clean Water Program stormwater and community benefit goals. It will create desperately needed accessible green space to enhance recreation, community gathering, and overall health for residents of El Monte, a critically underserved community. It will create tangible, positive stormwater management impacts, and we urge you to support his project.

Sincerely,

*Jessica Ancona*

Jessica Ancona  
Mayor, El Monte City