ITEM #1

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September 4, 2009

Los Angeles City Council
c/o City Clerk's Office
Attn: Ad Hoc River Committee
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

**REPORT ON RIVER RELATED PROJECTS**

The following information provides details of the River Unit's progress on the implementation of the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (LARRMP):

**River Update Meeting**. The City Planning Department's River Unit participated in the July 28th Design Workshops where they provided information on the River Improvement Overlay District and the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan. The Unit also assisted in gathering input from the public on proposed locations and strategies for future river improvement projects.

**High Speed Rail Authority**. The River Unit has been working alongside the Department's Metro Unit, who in cooperation with the Department of Transportation, the Bureau of Engineering, the General Services Department, and the Community Redevelopment Agency, have been working to assist the City in developing a position and strategy relative to the future High Speed Rail system. The Department has prepared a Report on the High Speed Rail which will be presented at the next Ad Hoc Meeting on September 14th.

**River Task Force Committees.** In addition to participating on the City and County's River Task Force Committees the River Unit has joined similar meetings that are occurring for other area waterbodies including the Arroyo Seco, the Ballona Creek, and the Pacoima Wash.

**River Improvement Overlay.** The City Planning Department has proposed a new River Improvement Overlay supplemental use district (RIO district). The first RIO district will be the Los Angeles River Improvement Overlay (LA-RIO), which corresponds with the boundaries identified in the LARRMP.

The RIO and LA-RIO were considered by the City Planning Commission on February 12,

2009. The RIO district and LA-RIO were subsequently heard by the Planning and Land Use Management Committee and River Ad Hoc Committee in a joint meeting on March 23, 2009, where it was unanimously approved. On April 8, 2009, City Council referred the two ordinances to the City Attorney for review of form and legality. The ordinances are still being reviewed by the City Attorney and will hopefully be considered by the City Council later this Fall.

**Cornfield/Arroyo Seco Specific Plan (Plan).** The City is preparing the Plan which will guide the future development of an approximately 660 acre area. The Plan is the only large public project that is participating in the US Green Building Council's LEED for Neighborhood Development pilot program. The Plan area includes two of the opportunity areas identified by the Los Angeles River Revitalization Masterplan (LARRMP).

The draft Environmental Impact Review (EIR) that is currently being prepared for the Plan will be a program-level document that will analyze the environmental impacts of two alternatives linked to the policies included in the Plan—the Preferred Plan Alternative, Modified Plan Alternative—and a "No Project" Alternative. The Plan along with the NOP and Initial Study are accessible at the website: http://cornfieldsla.googlepages.com.

A Draft EIR is expected to be completed by Winter 2010. Following the comment period the Draft EIR and Plan are expected to be considered by the Planning Commission by late Spring 2010. Feedback on the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan can can be sent to: Claire Bowin at: 200 N. Spring Street, Room 721 or Claire.bowin@lacity.org

**Warner Center Specific Plan** The Warner Center Specific Plan (Plan) is currently being revised and the Department has recommended that the boundaries of the Plan be expanded one block north so that its new northernmost boundary would abut the southern bank of the Los Angeles River (River). The expanded Plan which includes the area bounded by Victory Boulevard on the south, the River on the north, Topanga Boulevard to the west, and Canoga Avenue to the east would facilitate redevelopment opportunities and improve river access. The new area would be identified as a special riverfront sub-area of the Plan and would continue to be included within the boundaries of the Canoga Park Neighborhood Council. The River Unit participated in a community meeting on March 20th to discuss this proposal with the area stakeholders.

Questions about the Warner Center Specific Plan can be directed to Tom Glick at 818.374.5062 or Tom.Glick@lacity.org.

If you have any questions, please contact the River Unit:
Claire Bowin at 213.473.9987 or Claire.Bowin@lacity.org
Deborah Kahen at 213.978.1395 or Deborah.Kahen@lacity.org

Sincerely,

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP
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