



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND ISSUES

A series of Community Action Team meetings were held in the Watershed to solicit community concerns and issues, suggestions for improvements and expand awareness of the Plan. These were followed by two neighborhood meetings that focused on potential projects, with emphasis on projects along the Creek, projects along power line transmission corridors, and new parks.

Meetings were held at the following locations:

- September 9, 2004: South Los Angeles (Watts Senior Center)
- November 11, 2004: Florence/Firestone (Bethune Park)
- January 20, 2005: Compton (Compton Housing Authority)
- February 24, 2005: Southwest Los Angeles/Athens (Saint Michael's Church)
- February 26, 2005: Southeast Los Angeles (Augustus Hawkins Natural Park)

During preparation of this Plan, an Urban Watershed Summit was held at Compton College, organized by Heal the Bay, with a discussion session on the Compton Creek

Watershed. Though the meeting topics varied, some recurring issues and concerns were brought up in nearly every context. Three overarching themes are discussed below.

1. Trash

Trash in the Watershed is a widespread problem, and concerns ranged from not enough trash receptacles to control of illegal dumping. Generally, community members perceived that public outreach and education, along with an improvement in the continuity of government services, could improve the trash problem. Dumping was of primary concern, and suggestions were made to increase lighting where dumping occurs or block off streets that access the Creek right-of-way. Public comments reflected a perception that governmental entities were not properly maintaining parts of the Watershed that gather trash. Community members expressed interest in increasing enforcement and penalties for those who litter or dump.

Municipal services for trash collection, recycling, large item disposal, and reporting dumping violations are complicated and overlap jurisdictions. Community members remarked that they did not know which numbers they should call to access the various waste services available to them. Though community members did not critique the system of waste disposal services, advice and comments on how to navigate the system based on where people lived within the Watershed did come up frequently. This may indicate a need for a Watershed-wide standard system, or at least better dissemination of resource information.

Interest was expressed in making trash more of a community issue, and not relying on government agencies. The current system of voluntary community cleanups and for-profit waste haulers was discussed. Volunteer community cleanups were thought to have the additional benefit of educating community members, and perhaps affecting future littering activities. Vacating alleyways was another suggested way of connecting Watershed residents to the problem of trash. Transferring ownership of alleyways used for dumping to community members would keep them cleaner because the alleyways would be locked,

and because they would be maintained by community members. The theme of bringing community members in on trash issues previously thought of as the domain of public government was always mentioned in a positive light.

2. Past Planning Disconnects

Animosity of residents towards past planning efforts was brought up many times in the public meetings. There is a perception that neighborhoods and communities are planned against in favor of less sustainable, but more lucrative short-term business deals. Also, Watershed residents feel like they are forced to bear an unduly large portion of project impacts. For example, the Alameda Corridor is intended to benefit the larger community, but those benefits are often overshadowed locally by the impacts of the infrastructure. Watershed residents are generally concerned with industrial and transportation related developments, but they are capable of resisting even seemingly beneficial park projects if they rely on development tools like eminent domain. Long-time residents recall eminent domain being used for projects that did not necessarily better the community in the long run, so they are unlikely to support any water-quality projects that employ its use to acquire property.

Watershed residents are also concerned by the lack of community organization. Some expressed frustration that community needs are not taken into account in developments. Others identified a need for a notification network that would spread word about upcoming projects before the public comment period ended and the projects were vested. Although opportunities for participation in the planning process exist, residents seem unaware of how to use them to advantage.

Community members would comment about placing desired community amenities and water quality projects within development projects that were in the approval process within the watershed. These activities are contingent upon the community being able to access the development process before it is too late to add amenities to in-progress projects.

3. Public Amenities and Public Safety

A repeated concern mentioned at public meetings was that while park space and other public amenities do exist, they were often unusable due to inadequate maintenance practices or due to illegal activities being conducted onsite. Community members do not want to push for new community amenity projects if they would immediately be taken over by undesirable elements of society when completed. Two strategies for avoiding this scenario were suggested: designing projects using community-based urban design principles, and maintaining an authoritative community presence in built projects. Augustus F. Hawkins Natural Park was seen as a model for new park space. Not only does it provide a pleasant environment, but because it is gated and locked at night residents felt safer being there.

Firm rules were appreciated in places where they were enforced because the majority of law-abiding site users understood that the rules kept their amenities from being taken over by undesirable people and illegal activities. The differences between parks that had lax rule enforcement and strict rule enforcement were clear to meeting attendees. The fewer rules enforced, the more intimidating the people using the site might become to others.

Employing good urban design principals to design new spaces was suggested as one way to avoid the cooption of public space by undesirable elements, and to build a sense of ownership in the community. The more the community is involved in designing sites, the higher the probability that the site will be used and enjoyed by the community. More standard urban design elements need to be incorporated for park safety, such as good lighting, and not creating areas that are too secluded.

A detailed list of specific community concerns has been drawn up that summarizes all of the various types of input generated by the community meetings. This list covers the overarching themes discussed above, as well as additional concepts and viewpoints brought up by individual meeting attendees.

■ Community Concerns

- Blighted areas should be targeted
- Crime in new projects
- Involve youth with horses and with nature
- Old factories (brownfields) should be converted
- Park use—picnics
- New parks may be unused and dangerous
- Restore ecology and society at the same time—put projects in high-crime areas
- Roadways should have more pedestrian and green space
- Schools and recreation sites are under planted
- The area should be safer
- The plan needs to be quality of life oriented
- There are flood-prone areas in the watershed
- There should be more hiking and biking trails
- There should be more open space
- Unique community-oriented developments rather than uniform malls
- Water retention should lead to more usable water

■ Development

- Beautification tied to/funded by development conditions
- Development is rampant and destructive in the watershed
- Too few suitable park sites in watershed

■ Education

- Get kids involved in water quality testing
- Kids should not have to be bussed far away to see nature
- More interaction with students
- School-aged children should be involved in creek-side stewardship activities
- Youth Activities

▣ Environmental

- Environmental education for politicians and citizens
- Habitat restoration is needed
- Cleanup leaking gas station fuel tanks
- More natural habitat
- More permeable surfaces
- More trees in the watershed
- Control of nuisance animals—pigeons, rats, feral dogs, and cats
- More places for recreation
- Public health—obesity, children with asthma
- The economy of the watershed (industrial/logistics) is bad for public health
- Toxic schools
- Water quality should be monitored
- Water supply should be clean

▣ Operations and Maintenance

- Who will maintain projects?

▣ Public Involvement Issues

- Apathy
- Beautification first—stewardship will follow
- Community involvement will only come after real results
- Culture of disenfranchisement
- Delivery of information/Outreach strategies
- Little or no citizen/resident involvement or accountability
- More bilingual outreach
- More neighborhood level outreach
- More public and youth engagement—seek input from them
- More public outreach
- Multiple projects linked together for greater popularity with public and politicians
- No one values the creek because there is no sense of place

▣ Waste Disposal

- Alley dumping
- Dead animals need to be picked up quickly
- Disposal sites for bulky/hazardous items
- Dumping in public places
- Homeless encampments can generate trash
- Land fill fees are high

- No alternative to dumping
- People from outside the city dumping in the creek
- Recycling/waste disposal standards
- Spend money from littering fines on cleanup efforts
- Tax on trash
- Trash generation studies

▣ Watershed Management Plan Process

- There has not been enough community outreach and involvement
- There is not enough political support

▣ Disconnected Planning

- Cities and counties have no incentive to do any more than the minimum amount of testing
- Development is vested before community can react
- Eminent domain
- Eminent domain is used too freely
- Global business always trumps community concerns
- Sediment contamination cleanup money is going to the harbor that could go to Compton Creek
- No community structure to hear about city planning projects
- No incentive to restore lower-creek habitat without upstream BMPs
- Park plans are construction/capital rich but operations/maintenance poor
- Piecemeal planning focuses on portions of systems
- Planning efforts are feared by the community
- Potential community benefits from new projects are seldom realized
- The Alameda Corridor does not give enough back to the community
- The community has low expectations for the results of big plans
- The planning and development process is not transparent
- The planning and development process never works
- There are no big forces pushing for WQ accountability in the CC Watershed

- There is a regulatory disincentive to do more testing, as that will probably result in more TMDLs
- ▣ **Public Agency Commitment and Coordination**
 - Animal waste cleanup enforced
 - Alley cleanup should be enforced
 - BMPs should be installed and expanded
 - CC-WMP will not be used after it is written
 - Construction dumping is not seriously enforced (trash tracking strategies should be implemented)
 - Coordination between street sweeping and trash pickup
 - Development-oriented cities in watershed work against park space needs
 - Differing levels of trash service, penalties and enforcement from one jurisdiction to another
 - Enforcement of businesses
 - Enforcement of illegal dumping rules
 - Existing law enforcement may not have time to enforce dumping
 - Federal-level enforcement
 - Find a smart way to stop the incentive to dump
 - Inadequate/uneven trash pickup services depending on jurisdiction
 - Monetary incentives for recycling
 - More trash containers
 - More trash pickup, more street sweeping

- More trash receptacles needed
- Municipalities crack down on derelict properties
- Need waste removal plans from the city
- No one from USACE or LACDPW is leading the way
- Not enough money available for community needs
- Screen storm drains
- Separate Jurisdictions make it harder to implement good trash and WQ ideas
- Some local politicians do not care about environmental issues
- Super-regional entities (like railroads) impact the watershed but have no stake in it

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To articulate goals and objectives for the Watershed, various sources were utilized, including the comments made at the Community Action Team meetings, the Neighborhood Workshops, the Plan's Steering Committee meetings, and several documents, including Grounds for Renewal; the Revitalization of Compton Creek, Common Ground, from the Mountains to the Sea, and the watershed plans for Ballona Creek, Rio Hondo, and Dominguez Channel. Based on this information, the following goals and objectives for the Compton Creek Watershed have been identified, organized under three main topics: Water, Land, and Community.

Table 3-1 Compton Creek Watershed Goals and Objectives

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Objectives</i>
1. WATER	
A. Improve Water Quality	<p>Implement projects, Best Management Practices and other methods to reduce pollutant loads and achieve applicable water quality standards, consistent with TMDL implementation</p> <p>Prioritize on-site water quality solutions before end-of-pipe water treatment</p> <p>Expand water quality monitoring</p>
B. Improve Wetland and Riparian Habitat Quality and Quantity	<p>Improve wetland habitat in the natural bottom portions of Compton Creek</p> <p>Create wetland and riparian habitat wherever feasible</p> <p>Daylight tributary streams and restore riparian habitat where feasible</p>
C. Maintain Flood Protection	<p>Limit modifications of the storm drain network to locations where flood protection can be preserved or enhanced</p> <p>Encourage onsite stormwater detention to reduce runoff volume</p> <p>Implement nonstructural runoff management methods to the maximum extent feasible</p>
D. Optimize Water Resources to Reduce Dependence on Imported Water	<p>Expand water conservation programs</p> <p>Extend the distribution and range of uses of reclaimed water</p> <p>Promote on-site collection of stormwater for irrigation</p>
2. LAND	
A. Improve Terrestrial Habitat Quality and Quantity	<p>Create linear greenbelts along Compton Creek and transportation and utility corridors</p> <p>Provide native plant habitat on publicly owned land where consistent with use</p>
B. Improve Access to Open Space and Recreation for All Communities	<p>Increase public open space and gathering places by targeted, prioritized programs of land acquisition from willing sellers</p> <p>Improve public access to Compton Creek</p> <p>Connect open spaces to bike paths and transit access points</p> <p>Provide for maintenance of parks, open space, and trails</p>
C. Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Access and Safety	<p>Create a network of trails and bike paths throughout the watershed to link public facilities and open spaces</p> <p>Provide for public safety and security along pedestrian and bicycle routes</p>
D. Practice Stewardship of the Landscape	<p>Expand use of native plants in landscaping</p> <p>Identify and preserve historical sites and cultural landscapes</p>

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3. COMMUNITY	
A. Use Watershed Restoration to Improve Quality of Life	Promote restoration of Compton Creek and other watershed resources
B. Protect and Enhance Public Safety	Expand programs and actions to improve public health and safety
C. Involve the Public through Outreach and Education	<p>Conduct education and outreach programs to expand appreciation of Compton Creek and the importance of watershed restoration</p> <p>Encourage participation of existing community-based organizations in watershed restoration activities</p>
D. Implement Multi-Objective Planning and Projects	<p>Incorporate sustainability objectives and practices in all public projects</p> <p>Leverage planned single-purpose infrastructure projects by incorporating multiple objectives and partnerships</p> <p>Provide incentives to promote sustainable, multiple-objective private sector projects</p>
E. Realize the Potential of Watershed Restoration for Sustainable Economic Development	<p>Recycle underused sites along Compton Creek as frontage for new, sustainable mixed-use development</p> <p>Recycle vacant sites to foster economic development and expand housing</p>