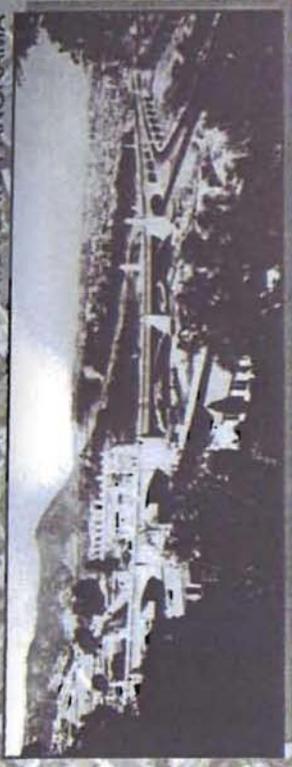


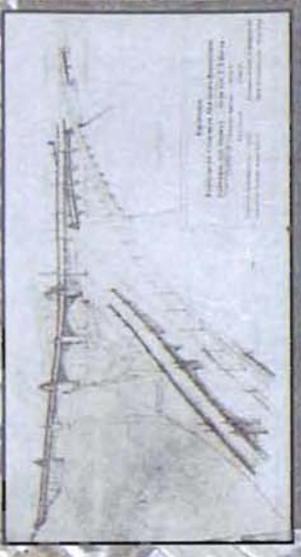
Attachment
SMMC Item 15
June 23, 2008

Materials prepared by: C. McLane/A. Petlic, 6/17/08

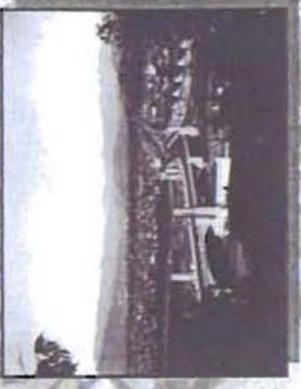
HISTORIC PANORAMA



ORIGINAL DRAWING



HISTORIC PHOTO



RED CAR PARK



SUNNYNOOK RIVER PARK SITE PHOTOS

WILDLIFE



VIEW TO SUNNYNOOK
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE



VIEW OF BIKE PATH



INTERSTATE 5

GLENDALE BLVD

RED CAR BRIDGE
SUPPORTS



HYPERION BRIDGE VIEW
NORTH TO RIVER



3. Environmental Project Summary: Sunnynook River Park

This grant application is seeking funds from the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program to support the Los Angeles River-adjacent park component of the Sunnynook River Park project. Sunnynook River Park is a priority project of the *Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan*, adopted by the Los Angeles City Council in May 2007. The proposed park site is located on a California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) easement, adjacent to the Glendale-Narrows reach of the Los Angeles River, a portion of the River that supports a diversity of wildlife due to its naturalized (soft-bottom) streambed. The park project will provide additional mitigation for a related transportation project, which involves seismic upgrades and changes in geometry to the Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct Complex that spans the River to the south, located between the communities of Silver Lake and Atwater Village in the City of Los Angeles. Combined with the separate mitigation from the Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct Complex and improvements from the transportation project itself, the entire Sunnynook River Park project will result in the creation of a continuous loop trail around this segment of the River, with a walking path, interpretive signage, enhanced habitat, and water quality improvements. Most importantly, the project will provide a vital pedestrian connection to the Los Angeles River for the large population that visits Griffith Park as well as to the communities of Silver Lake and Atwater Village. The park component of the Sunnynook Park project will be a key destination along the River, providing critical connections to existing facilities—along a heavily-used portion of the River bikeway, to a pedestrian bridge over the River, to a pedestrian bridge over the Interstate 5 (I-5) Freeway and to existing recreation facilities and Griffith Park. The project will result in the realization of a “River loop” typology recommended in the Master Plan and will promote the viability of connecting existing riparian habitat along the River corridor as well as out into the community via its proximity to the City’s largest open space, Griffith Park. The funding request for this park portion of the project is \$500,000, an amount necessary to build the trail element.

The historic Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct Complex is in need of seismic upgrades, and this represents an opportunity to make further improvements on and around the bridge. For example, improvements and mitigation will be made to *pedestrian safety* by consolidating and widening sidewalks, changing the geometry of the I-5 off-ramp to allow for increased access to the adjacent bike path, creating a pocket park on the southwest corner and traffic-light controlled cross-walks, and restoring historic balustrades on the bridge. The mitigation for the impacts from construction on and around the bridge will be the addition of a pedestrian bridge downstream of the bridge, to be built on the former Pacific Red Car railroad support structures that extend from the existing bridge and are embedded in the River bottom.

Upstream of the Glendale-Hyperion Viaduct Complex, the Sunnynook Pedestrian Bridge spans the River and connects via a pedestrian bridge over the I-5 to Griffith Park. With the addition of the Sunnynook River Park, an important recreational and educational pedestrian loop will be created around the River and will link Griffith Park, Red Car Park, and the new pocket park on the southwest corner of the viaduct complex. Moreover, the Sunnynook River Park’s landscaping concept is consistent with the Griffith Park Master Plan Working Group’s idea of fostering an “urban wildlife identity,” with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy’s idea of treating the River as an “urban wildlife refuge,” and with both the County’s 1996 and City’s 2007 River Master Plans. Additionally, the project’s water quality treatment components are consistent with

the City's recently-adopted "Integrated Resources Plan" and current "Water Quality Master Plan" effort.

The land for Sunnynook River Park is owned by Caltrans and is located between the I-5 Freeway and the Los Angeles River. It is currently a landlocked, degraded piece of vacant, underutilized land, inaccessible to the public, but frequented by homeless people. There is existing vegetation on the site, but much of it is non-native and weedy, and does not fully support healthy connections to the adjacent, thriving riparian habitat in the River bottom. The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy has documented the value of the Los Angeles River as an important regional wildlife corridor. By replacing the non-native plants on the park site with native riparian and upland plant communities, the ecosystem of the River will be enhanced and extended by providing appropriate nesting, roosting and forage habitat for the over 116 documented bird species, habitat for small mammals, reptiles and amphibians.

With a pedestrian trail, an accessible linkage will be made to the Los Angeles River for visitors to regionally-significant Griffith Park (over 10 million visitors annually) as well as the local community. Via the bikepath, directly adjacent to Sunnynook River Park, this park will link to numerous pocket parks along the way, Rio de Los Angeles State Park, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Los Angeles River Center and Gardens, and eventually, the state-owned Cornfields Park, currently under design development.

Interpretive signs along the path that trace the history and development of the River will help orient visitors to the River's role in the founding of Los Angeles, the importance of the ecosystem of the River, and the plans for its rehabilitation. With increased use and patrols by park rangers, the area will be made safer for park users, pedestrians using all of the bridges, visitors from the local community, and those accessing the area from the River greenway. The Sunnynook River Park project represents an important opportunity to connect human and wildlife communities that have been historically divided by significant infrastructure developments, including the I-5 Freeway and increasingly congested local roadways. Implementing the Sunnynook River Park project in conjunction with improvements to existing and planned transportation projects will go a long way in demonstrating that River revitalization can go hand-in-hand with visionary multi-modal transportation planning.