

CF 20-1205 – Introduced by Councilmember Martinez on 9/22/20, this motion requests that the department of Recreation and Parks in coordination with the Army Corp of Engineers and LA County report back in 30 days on developing a revised master plan for the Sepulveda Basin, including a budget, and potential funding sources. The motion was referred to the Health, Education, Neighborhoods, Parks, Arts & Rivers (HENPAR) Committee. On November 9, 2020 the motion was waived out of HENPAR and placed on the general Los Angeles City Council Meeting agenda for November 10, 2020. The motion, combined with several other motions, passed unanimously with no discussion.

The motion does mention that the basin provides critical habitat for plants and wildlife. However, it goes on to state that the 250 acres of land classed as Environmentally Sensitive or Vegetative Management, which includes the Wildlife Areas, are “underutilized spaces” which can be turned into new amenities. It is the opinion of the Encino Neighborhood Council (ENC) that the Wildlife Areas be preserved or even expanded, revitalized from damage due to neglect and abuse including recent fires, and be placed under future Federal or State oversight to ensure viability. The goal of turning the basin into a “world class open space” following plans developed for Exposition Park and Silver Lake Reservoir is disquieting as there is no guarantee of preserving the wildlife areas.

The very last point in the motion is that the new master plan “Be created through a robust community engagement process”. While the ENC welcomes the objectives of the revised master plan, it strongly suggests that community engagement should be the first thing considered, not the last. The lack of any community engagement in formulating the motion highlights this consideration. The ENC is supportive of many of the goals, including increased mobility and way-finding, clarification of responsibility for the various areas, integration with Olympic and River venues, and evaluation of land uses. To ensure community engagement, the Encino Neighborhood Council requests that it be involved in the process by appointing dedicated representatives who will be apprised on a timely basis of all actions related to formulating the revised master plan.