

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Date: May 22, 2025

To: Measure W: Safe, Clean Water Program Administrative Oversight Committee  
Matthew Szabo, City Administrative Officer  
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst  
Randall Winston, Office of the Mayor

From: Michael Scaduto, PE, ENV SP *Michael Scaduto* Digitally signed by Michael Scaduto  
Principal Engineer Date: 2025.05.22 08:53:57-07'00'  
Safe, Clean Water Implementation Division  
LA Sanitation & Environment

**Subject: Round 7 (FY 26/27) Safe, Clean Water Community Proposed Project Evaluation for a Letter of Non-Objection from the City of Los Angeles - Reimagining La Brea Tar Pits Project (CD 5) by Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Approve the recommendation by LA Sanitation and Environment (LASAN) for the Measure W: Safe, Clean Water Program Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) to issue a Letter of Non-Objection to the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation's submission of the Reimagining La Brea Tar Pits Project to the Safe, Clean Water Regional Infrastructure Program (IP)
2. Authorize LASAN and the City Administrative Officer, with the concurrence of the Chief Legislative Analyst and the Mayor's Office, to draft and issue a Letter of Non-Objection for the project.

**BACKGROUND**

The Safe, Clean Water Regional IP application process requires proposed project applicants to include a Letter of Support from the municipality in which the project is proposed.

The Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation is seeking a letter of support from the City of Los Angeles for the County's Reimagining La Brea Tar Pits Project (Project). This Project Proponent intends to submit this application as part of the Round 7 Regional Safe, Clean Water IP to the Central Santa Monica Bay Watershed Area, due on July 31, 2025. The Project Proponent is seeking to acquire \$9M in Regional IP funds to construct stormwater water quality improvements onsite.

The proposed Project is located in Council District 5 (CD 5) within the northeast Central Santa Monica Bay watershed. The project site, the La Brea Tar Pits, is an active paleontological research site with areas of natural asphalt pits which have seeped up

from the ground over a large period of time. The Project Proponent has provided a cost estimate of \$435M for the overall renovation of the parcel, an estimated project timeline, and has performed preliminary hydrology. The project scope proposes to implement stormwater infrastructure and biofiltration areas across the campus of the institution, providing aspects of urban greening and tar mitigation.

## **CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

LASAN leads City efforts to review requests for letters of support or non-objection for the Safe Clean Water Regional Program. As part of the review process, LASAN coordinates and receives feedback from various stakeholders: including the project proponents, Safe Clean Water Program Watershed Coordinators, other City departments, and the City's Safe, Clean Water Program Working Group (Working Group), to make final recommendations for the AOC to consider. In the review of this specific request, and in alignment with the *City's Policies and Procedures for Review of Safe Clean Water Program Community Proposed Projects*, it was determined that:

- The Project generally aligns with Safe, Clean Water Program guidelines.
- The Project has strong community support from various stakeholders and has displayed tangible sources of funding.
- The Project has clear plans for operation and maintenance, permitting and right of way ownerships, detailed cost estimates, and other technical details developed. O&M responsibilities of the Project will be the responsibility of the Project Proponent.

Therefore, LASAN recommends that the AOC supports a Letter of Non-Objection to Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History Foundation's submission of the Project to the Central Santa Monica Bay's Safe, Clean Water Regional Round 7 (FY 26/27) Infrastructure Program. LASAN will continue to coordinate with the Project Proponent and recommend that they receive a Letter of Support from the appropriate Los Angeles County agency. The City will carefully consider updated information for any potential future funding requests to the Safe, Clean Water Program for this effort.

cc: Patty Huber, CAO  
Jacqueline Wagner, CAO  
Janice Chang Yu, CAO  
Hermineh Amijanian, CAO  
Rafael Prieto, CLA  
Blayne Sutton-Wills, CLA  
Virginia Wei, MO  
Barbara Romero, LASAN  
Julie Allen, LASAN  
Susie Santilena, LASAN

## ATTACHMENT 1: Project Summary

### Recommend Letter of Non-Objection:

The City of Los Angeles, Safe Clean Water Program Working Group recommends to issue a Letter of Non-Objection. If required, a Letter of Support should be sought from the appropriate Los Angeles County agency.

### Brief Description

The La Brea Tar Pits (Project) is a Los Angeles County multi-purpose public institution — one of the largest paleontological sites in the United States and a registered National Natural Landmark. The Project will create a new Ice Age Wing for education and exhibitions, modernize the Page Museum for research and collections, and improve public grounds and infrastructure. The Project intends to submit a \$9M grant application to the Safe Clean Water Program for stormwater management, green infrastructure including bioswales, urban greening, and tar mitigation. The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (Project Proponent) is in the process of fundraising for this \$435M project, and has raised \$50M to date from public and private partners. The Project will utilize SCWP funds to implement biofiltration planters at the northwestern, northeastern, and southeastern portions of the site. These BMPs will aid in improving water quality before they enter the stormwater system. Additional tree planting, park, and habitat enhancement are also part of the project scope.

### Project Scope (SCWP Focused)

- Water Quality
  - Three biofiltration areas based on the four identified drainage areas:
    - Northwestern portion - Oil Creek is to be refurbished as a bioswale. The existing creek will be lined with an impermeable liner, partially filled with gravel, perforated pipe, soil, and plants. Runoff would be conveyed to the creek via sheet flow and existing or relocated underground pipes. After filtration, stormwater would be collected at the bottom of the system and connected to the existing downstream stormwater system.
    - Northeastern portion - Large planter will be constructed as a biofiltration planter. The planter would be excavated 4-5 feet, lined with an impermeable liner, filled with gravel, a perforated pipe, soil, and plants. After filtration, stormwater would be collected at the bottom of the system and connected to the existing downstream stormwater system.
    - Southeastern portion - East of Lake Pit, an in-ground biofiltration planter will be installed. The construction of this system is similar to the Oil Creek system as described above. The subdrainage area would be connected into public storm drains mains in either Willshire Boulevard or South Curson Avenue.
- Water Supply Benefit - **None proposed**
- Community Investment
  - Reduction of Heat Island Effect - Addition of ~200 trees
  - Augmenting Recreational Opportunities - Improving green space at the museum, Miracle Mile neighborhood, and reconfiguration of pedestrian path onsite.
  - Enhancement of Park/Habitat Space - The park will establish three distinct landscaping zones in the 13 acre park encircled by a looping pedestrian path.

Each loop would have a theme that represents different geologic epochs—Pleistocene in the southeastern loop, Holocene in the northwestern .

### **Hydrology**

- Total Capture Area: - 3.4 ac-ft
  - Pervious Area: - 1.6 ac-ft
  - Impervious Area: - 1.7 ac-ft
- 85th Percentile, 24-Hour Storm rainfall depth: 1.7 in
- Estimated Runoff from 85th Percentile, 24-Hour Storm: 0.8 ac-ft

### **Cost Breakdown**

**Total Estimated Cost:** \$435,000,000 (of

**Total Maintenance Cost:** TBD

**Total Monitoring Cost:** TBD