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Dear Honorable Mayor and City Council Members,

The Los Angeles River has been a source of inspiration and opportunity long before my time on the Long Beach City Council. From the original caretakers, the Gabrielino and Tongva people, to the countless neighborhoods and communities alongside the 51-mile waterway, the river has always offered unlimited potential. The existing river and limited open space provide a patchwork of areas for residents to experience nature, exercise with friends, and spend time with loved ones.

As the river continues to transform, I strongly encourage the city to explore all options to develop new public access and open space alongside the Los Angeles River, with a focus on communities lacking park space and those disproportionately impacted by environmental injustice.

Long Beach has already made progress in the past few years to provide park space that connects the community to the Los Angeles River, in areas like Deforest Park, the Dominquez Gap Wetlands, and Drake Park. However, certain areas of the city still lack significant access to parks and open space.

Many of the communities surrounding the LA River are also disproportionately impacted by several sources of pollution, from heavy traffic on the 710 and 405 freeways, to refineries and port activities to the south. Additional green space will help reduce the urban heat island effect, making neighborhoods cooler, and even reduce some of harmful air pollution that has resulted in higher rates of respiratory illnesses compared to other areas in the city.

For these reasons, I strongly support agenda item 16 and I look forward to supporting efforts to ensure all residents have access to open space and parks in their community, including identifying and supporting federal funding opportunities. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress