ASLA SCC AWARDS 2016 - Project Description

Project: LA Riverfront Park, Phase II / Studio City, CA

PURPOSE OF PROJECT

The LA Riverfront Park, Phase II converts a maintenance-only access road into a verdant, multipurpose linear park. This half-mile trail provides much-needed river access and recreational opportunities for the community, and performs multiple functions as a water treatment system by capturing, cleansing and recharging stormwater runoff before releasing the water back to the River.

ROLE OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

The Landscape Architect's role as prime consultant was to coordinate the design with the civil engineer, structural engineer, electrical engineer, and city geotechnical engineer, as well as with residents via community outreach. The landscape architect aided in moving the plans through the plan check process with the County of Los Angeles Flood Control and the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACE). Through a shared dialogue, the team maximized the project's potential to inspire greater environmental awareness. The landscape architect designed the trail alignment and seating areas at trail entries including interpretive signage, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, native planting, retaining walls, and low impact design (LID) strategies.

SIGNIFICANCE

LA Riverfront Park, Phase II is an example of landscape architects leading a project that successfully integrates LID and BMP strategies along a transportation corridor. Begun in 2005, the Los Angeles Riverfront Park, Phase II project challenged the ACE's expectations and project allowances, paving the way for future work. In the past, County maintenance roads were gated with no trespassing signs. This project demonstrated that a safe and enjoyable trail could maintain the County's objective of public safety. These attributes, in addition to over 100 carbon-sequestering and shade-giving native trees and a native plant palette supports natural habitat, improves air quality, and increases the physical health and social vitality of the community; thus improving quality of life. This project has won three awards to date: 2016 Los Angeles Business Council Award of Excellence, 2016 California Trails and Greenways Merit Award for Development, and the 2015 ASCE Metropolitan Los Angeles' Outstanding Bikeways and Trails Project.

SPECIAL FACTORS

This linear park provides an active recreation path, a restorative park and seating areas, treats stormwater, improves air quality, increases habitat, and provides a beautiful river edge in what was an unused maintenance corridor. Before construction, surface runoff from streets and gutters flowed untreated over the County's service road and into the L.A. River. Muddy, flooded conditions on the maintenance road required constant upkeep and polluted the river. To solve this problem, an infiltration bioswale captures runoff from the neighboring streets as well as the trail. A gabion retaining wall allows water to flow off the streets through the wall into the bioswale which filters out pollutants and provides an opportunity for groundwater recharge.