



# Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy

## Request for Interest

May 5, 2021

### Introduction

As part of the 100-Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard, the City of Los Angeles (City) intends to develop a Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy (Community TYES) related to the ongoing environmental restoration and open space development of the Taylor Yard site along the Los Angeles River. Through this Request for Interest (RFI), the City seeks expressions of interest from potential partners to help lead, participate in, and contribute to the project to develop the Strategy.

### Background

The Los Angeles River's largest revitalization project in the City of Los Angeles is underway at the Taylor Yard site, a portion of a former rail yard which sits amidst the communities of Glassell Park, Cypress Park, and Elysian Valley in Northeast Los Angeles. Three publicly-owned adjacent sites, including the parcels known as G1 ("Bowtie") and G2; and the existing Rio de Los Angeles State Park, together comprise 100 acres of connected land. The public agency owners -- the City of Los Angeles (G2), the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) (G2 easement), and California State Parks (G1) -- have joined together in a collaboration called the "100-Acre Partnership at Taylor Yard" to jointly plan, implement, and operate public improvements across the entire Taylor Yard site. The City will lead the development of the Equity Strategy on behalf of the 100-Acre Partners ("The Partners"), with their close cooperation (see Appendix B for more information on the 100-Acre Partnership).

During listening sessions and community engagement in recent years, the Partners have heard concerns from community members about "green gentrification," in which public investments in parks and open space that provide public goods are at the same time believed to contribute to rapid changes in surrounding communities such as resident displacement and other negative effects; this is a rising concern in communities nationwide. Some residents of the communities around the Taylor Yard project site raised concerns that the proposed open space investments will lead to their displacement as housing becomes less affordable, or that local small businesses would be unable to survive as the area attracted new private investment. Some worry that such changes will negatively affect the prevailing social and cultural character of their neighborhoods. Community members also spotlighted the needs that already exist in the community aside from the park space and environmental cleanup that the project aims to provide; these include job opportunities, housing security, youth programs, and infrastructure improvements, to name a few. The City and The Partners believe that a successful Taylor Yard

project overall must help address these issues to the extent that it can, in an inclusive, thoughtful, and proactive manner.



Figure 1: Taylor Yard Site Vicinity

Over the past several years, the Partners have performed a variety of planning and concept development work across the Taylor Yard site including: site assessments and technical investigations (with partial funding from United States Environmental Protection Agency); conceptual designs for the G2 parcel (City of LA Bureau of Engineering with funding from the State Coastal Conservancy); conceptual designs for a stormwater capture project at G1 (The Nature Conservancy, State Parks); scoping for recreational improvements at Rio de Los Angeles State Park (City of LA Department of Recreation and Parks, Office of Councilmember Gil Cedillo); funding approval for the Paseo del Rio access improvement project (all Partners with funding from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy); and the physical construction of the Taylor Yard Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge over the LA River (City of LA Bureau of Engineering and

Department of Transportation, and funding by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority). Links to information about these projects are included in Appendix A.



Figure 2: 100-Acre Partnership Area

## Vision Statement for the Equity Strategy

*The Taylor Yard Equity Strategy will augment the efforts to add much-needed open space and public access at the Taylor Yard G2 site and the larger 100-Acre Partnership area along the Los Angeles River by, at every stage, protecting the stability and cultural richness of surrounding communities and reflecting the aspirations and concerns of their residents regarding the range of ways in which this public investment will affect their neighborhoods.*

Integrating an Equity Strategy into the overall physical and programmatic improvements at Taylor Yard represents an opportunity to enhance the typical public agency project delivery process. Respondents to this RFI are invited to imagine how they may help to play a crucial role to help build the Los Angeles of the future by folding in programs to address equity needs as part of the Taylor Yard project's core implementation. Looking beyond the project site to tackle the complexities that development of this project presents to its neighbors will help solve problems for Angelenos while simultaneously helping to build support for the project's success.

## Concerns to Consider in the Equity Strategy's Development Process

We anticipate that these issues will be central to the community, policy, and action recommendations development, and the specific elements of the Equity Strategy will be deeply informed by the process of stakeholder engagement:

- Workforce development, job training, and job creation through the Taylor Yard Project
- Housing affordability and paths to homeownership
- Anti-displacement policies
- Small business retention and growth
- Youth enrichment
- Safety and public health
- City services and infrastructure
- Income and wealth development
- Access and connectivity to open space
- Healthy and resilient neighborhoods
- Environmental justice
- Cultural relevance and language access

## Touchstone Projects around the United States

See Appendix C for some examples of similar approaches to public projects.

- 11th Street Bridge Park - Anacostia, Washington DC
- Atlanta BeltLine - Atlanta, GA

## Scope

The City is seeking partners who are interested in working to develop the Equity Strategy, contributing advice, identifying program and funding support, and preparing to stand up an implementation approach to follow through on the Strategy's recommendations. Respondents to this Request for Interest would be able and willing to accomplish aspects of the following expected scope of work, either themselves or by partnering with other organizations. Detailed work scoping would be done among team partners at the project's launch. Respondents are asked to describe their ideas and approaches for each or any of these freely:

- Management and organization
  - Of team members and tasks
  - Of potential partner organizations to accomplish work
- Engagement
  - Of community members, agencies, and other stakeholders

- Of existing organizations to participate and help to implement actions
- Research
  - In a study area to be established for analysis and engagement
  - Of community demographics and case studies
  - Of potential effects the project might have on the surrounding communities
  - Of potential funders and partners
  - Of potential metrics and benchmarks to track progress
- Program and Policy Development
  - Based on ideas generated by the community, agencies, and others
  - Ensuring there is an implementation plan that identifies tools, programs and policies that will address the potential negative effects, such as displacement avoidance strategies
- Facilitation
  - Of internal team meetings and public meetings
- Communication
  - With the public, media, elected officials, and others -- with clarity and credibility
  - Of messages, information, and materials

We propose to initially focus on workforce development programming as a foundation for the Strategy's recommendations. This approach will reflect that this site was once a rail yard that employed many local community members. We hope to develop training and direct job opportunities for residents in the Cypress Park, Elysian Valley, Lincoln Heights and Glassell Park communities to participate in the restoration of the site and the eventual operation of the Taylor Yard River Park. Additionally, advocating for equitable distribution of grants and educational programs that support capacity building, including mentorships, internships, and technical assistance within the Park's surrounding neighborhoods will be an important first step.

## **Funding**

The City expects to devote \$190,000 toward the development of the Equity Strategy. The United States Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Program is also contributing staff resources to aid in developing the Strategy by conducting research on baseline conditions.

Responses are sought for those interested in helping to identify additional funding sources, and from organizations who may be able to invest funding into the development of the Equity Strategy and implement its recommendations, to complement the City's funds.

## Statement of Request

The City, on behalf of the 100-Acre Partnership, seeks expressions of interest from organizations and individuals who are able and willing to help develop and then implement the Community Taylor Yard Equity Strategy to enhance the Taylor Yard project and serve its surrounding communities. Responses are welcomed from non-profit organizations (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), institutions, for-profit consulting companies, financial institutions, individuals, informal community groups, and others.

In particular, the City seeks interested NPOs, NGOs, and CBOs that would be qualified, able, and enthusiastic to lead the community process to develop and create the Taylor Yard Equity Strategy. These organizations should have missions aligned with the vision and objectives expressed in this RFI and would also be interested in carrying through to implementing the Equity Strategy, in partnership with the community, the City, the 100-Acre Partners, and other involved organizations and individuals. The City is eager to learn about respondents' relationships and experiences in this realm of work. The City is also interested in the ability of organizations to source sustainable independent funding to dedicate to the project, in addition to the funding the City expects to identify.

Respondents interested in a role as a lead organization would be the primary coordinating center of a team approach to the effort that will likely include experts, advisory groups, housing advocates, academic partners, paid consultants (including historians and/or indigenous leaders, following the April 2021 recommendations of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group), and (potentially) mission-driven funders. The City and Partners are already working to identify other potential team members. Overall, the team's goal would be to develop the Strategy, and then -- importantly -- transition quickly into implementing its recommendations. For that transition to be successful, the larger team will need to build strong ties internally and deep trust with community members.

The City is especially interested in learning about partnering models that advance the vision and scope detailed above. To enhance its knowledge on Equity Strategies, the City is seeking information from respondents to this RFI that have substantive knowledge, experience, or insights related to the structure, operations, financing, benefits, and/or challenges of Equity Strategy models. The City encourages responses from Los Angeles based groups that have worked in the area, as well as Minority- and/or Women-Owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs).

In general, we request that statements of interest include information on the following topics:

1. Organization management and administration

2. Relevant experience as an organization
3. Experience of individuals that would be tasked to the project
4. Potential funding suggestions for the plan development and the implementation of recommended actions
5. Potential conflicts of interest, if any

## **Evaluation of Responses & Partnering Process**

The City and Partners will evaluate received expressions of interest and may then carry out a process to formally join with one or more respondents to develop the Equity Strategy. We may also invite community members and other stakeholders to offer feedback on responses to this RFI; therefore, respondents should be aware that responses may be made public during this process. Respondents should clearly note if any sections of their responses should remain confidential; the City and The Partners will respect such requests.

## **Schedule**

- RFI release date: May 5, 2021
- Questions from potential respondents due by email to michael.affeldt@lacity.org: May 14, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. Please use the phrase “Taylor Yard Equity Strategy RFI Questions” in the subject line.
- Responses to questions will be returned on May 27, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. and posted at both [www.lariver.org](http://www.lariver.org) and [www.100acrepartnership.org](http://www.100acrepartnership.org).
- Submissions due: June 18, 2021 at 5:00 p.m (digital submissions by email only, please).

## **Strategy Timeline**

*May - July 2021* - Identify a partner

- Identifying a Non-profit/CBO that is interested in taking a lead role and acting as a public face for the Equity Strategy.
- Identify other team partners.

*August 2021* - Kickoff Scoping and Engagement

- Develop a structure for the team that will be working on this project. Establish the vision and goals and begin reaching out to the community.

*September 2021* - Develop the Strategy

- Develop an outline for the strategy along with the community and share it with the various partners to ensure it encompasses the vision and goals.

*February 2022* - Complete the Draft Strategy and Initiate Workforce Development Programs

- Complete an initial strategy that includes next steps on how to move forward.
- Establish early workforce development programs with the help of expert NGOs.

*April 2022* - Finalize the Equity Strategy

- Incorporate feedback on the Draft and complete final document.

RFI Submittal Instructions

Please limit your Expression of Interest responses to no more than ten (10) pages in PDF format (resumes will not count toward page count). Links to online references content is welcomed. Upon receiving responses to the RFI, the City will initiate a review and may contact some or all of the respondents to follow up with additional questions and clarifications. We may also conduct one-on-one meetings with some or all of the respondents.

Please submit responses by email, by Friday June 18, 2021 at 5:00 p.m, to:

Michael Affeldt, LARiverWorks Director, City of Los Angeles  
michael.affeldt@lacity.org.

## **Appendix A:**

### Key References and Web Resources

*LA River Revitalization Master Plan:*

<http://www.lariver.org/Projects/MasterPlan/index.htm>

*Implementation Feasibility Report (IFR) - Taylor Yard G2*

<https://tayloryardriverprojects.lacity.org/projects/new-taylor-yard-g2-river-park-project-final-draft-implementation-feasibility-report-ifr>

100-acre partnership website

<https://100acpartnership.org/>

Bowtie website

<https://www.parks.ca.gov/thebowtie>

Taylor Yard Website

<https://tayloryardriverprojects.lacity.org/>

Department of Toxic Substances Control - Taylor Yard G2 Website

<https://dtsc.ca.gov/smrp-projects/taylor-yard-parcel-g2/>

*Northeast LA Community Plan*

<https://planning.lacity.org/plans-policies/community-plan-area/north-los-angeles>

*NELA RC Vision Plan*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0ByrM3FW425U-S0pTaWhCTHnrSUE/view>

*Past Due: Report and Recommendations of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group*

<http://civicmemory.la>

*City of Los Angeles Mobility Plan*

[https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/523f2a95-9d72-41d7-aba5-1972f84c1d36/Mobility\\_Plan\\_2035.pdf](https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/523f2a95-9d72-41d7-aba5-1972f84c1d36/Mobility_Plan_2035.pdf)

## Appendix B:

### 100-Acre Partnership Overview

The City, California State Parks (State Parks), and The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) have initiated a partnership to ensure that Taylor Yard properties create 100-acres of unified open space. The three parcels include: (1) The Rio de Los Angeles (RdLA) State Park, an existing 40-acre park owned by California State Parks (State Parks) and managed cooperatively by State Parks and the City of Los Angeles (City) through its Department of



Recreation and Parks (RAP); (2) The Taylor Yard G1 parcel, an 18-acre property also known as the “Bowtie” parcel for its distinctive boundary shape, which is owned and managed and in the process of design by State Parks; and (3) The Taylor Yard G2 parcel, a 42-acre property that is owned by the City. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) purchased and now holds the rights to a 12.5-acre easement within the Taylor Yard G2 parcel owned by the City.



## 100 Acre Partners



100-Acre Partnership Agencies**City of Los Angeles** (Includes BOE, RAP, LARiverWorks, and others)City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering (BOE)

The City of Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering (Engineering) is the City's lead agency for the planning, design, and construction management of public buildings, infrastructure, and open space projects. This important work improves the daily lives of all Angelenos. Engineering's infrastructure projects include City facilities, recreational and cultural facilities, sidewalk repairs, bridges, bulkheads, streets, transit projects, and police and fire facilities. Engineering also manages the construction and design of stormwater and wastewater system projects. Open space projects include the development of parks, landslide repairs, and the restoration of wetlands. In addition, Engineering is a leader in the revitalization of the Los Angeles River and the lead agency in the design of homelessness "Bridge" housing throughout the City. Engineering also manages permitting for construction in the public right-of-way, as well as the City's state-of-the-art online mapping system, NavigateLA. Engineering's projects are nationally-recognized in the areas of environmental sustainability, design, and construction management. Project development includes extensive community engagement and fully supports the City's goals of creating a prosperous, livable, and resilient city for all residents and businesses

City of Los Angeles LARiverWorks Team

The LARiverWorks team, in the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, leads program implementation and policy coordination for the Los Angeles River Revitalization, as guided by the City's 2007 Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (2007). The LARiverWorks team operates in the Mayor's Office of City Services (MOCS), under the leadership of Deputy Mayor Barbara Romero and Executive Officer Carol Armstrong (former Director of the LARiverWorks team).

City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP)

The Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) enhances the quality of life in Los Angeles by providing attractive, safe and well-maintained parks with diverse recreational opportunities to serve and enrich every community. RAP envisions an accessible, dynamic and sustainable park system for all Los Angeles residents and visitors to play, enjoy and build community. They also understand that park development and investment patterns in Los Angeles have created lasting disparities in access to quality open space, recreation programs, and facilities.



### California State Parks

#### Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.



### Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)

#### Mission

The MRCA is dedicated to the preservation and management of local open space and parkland, wildlife habitat, watershed lands, and trails in both wilderness and urban settings, and to ensuring public access to public parkland. The MRCA works in cooperation with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy and other local government partners to acquire parkland, participate in vital planning processes, and complete major park improvement projects. The agency provides natural resources and scientific expertise, critical regional planning services, and education and leadership programs for thousands of youth each year. It is one of the lead agencies revitalizing the Los Angeles River and its tributaries.

## Appendix C:

### Touchstone Peer Case Examples

#### 11th Street Bridge Park - Anacostia, Washington DC

The 11th Street Bridge Park is D.C.'s first elevated public park located on the piers of the old 11th Street Bridge spanning the Anacostia River. The project is being led, designed and co-built by the nonprofit Building Bridges Across the River which is raising private and public funds for the \$139 million project that includes construction (\$74 million) and funding for equity efforts such as land trusts. It seeks to bridge two neighborhoods separated by the River, Navy Yard and Capitol Hill (on the west side) - known for gentrification and growing wealth and Anacostia and Congress Heights (on the eastside) - known for poverty. The park will provide a new venue for healthy recreation, environmental education and the arts. The park is anticipated to open by 2023. As part of its planning efforts, the 11th Street Bridge Park launched an Equitable Development Plan that lays out ways that the Bridge Park can proactively address issues like economic development and affordable housing in ways that minimizes displacement of Ward 8 residents as the neighborhood improves.

<https://bbardc.org/equity/>

#### Atlanta BeltLine - Atlanta, GA

The Atlanta BeltLine project seeks to make Atlanta a global beacon for equitable, inclusive, and sustainable city life. The Atlanta BeltLine is the most comprehensive transportation and economic development effort ever undertaken in the City of Atlanta and among the largest, most wide-ranging urban redevelopment programs currently underway in the United States. It is a sustainable redevelopment project that will ultimately connect 45 intown neighborhoods via a 22-mile loop of multi-use trails, modern streetcar, and parks – all based on railroad corridors that formerly encircled Atlanta. When completed, it will provide first and last mile connectivity for regional transportation initiatives and put Atlanta on a path to 21st century economic growth and sustainability. In order to make the vision a reality in 2005 the Atlanta BeltLine Partnership was formed, it is nonprofit organization that helps keep the Atlanta BeltLine vision on track by enabling the construction of more parks and trails; engaging the public through tours, health and fitness programs, and special events; and empowering Atlanta BeltLine residents to connect with affordable housing, economic development and a healthy lifestyle. The Atlanta BeltLine has the potential to break down barriers and connect people, communities, and cultures that have been intentionally segregated for generations. The goal is to implement the BeltLine project in a way that ensures all Atlantans have the chance to participate in and benefit from its economic growth for generations to come.

<https://beltline.org/the-project/project-goals/equity-and-inclusion/>