



# NEWS

From the First Council District

## ED P. REYES, COUNCILMEMBER

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For Immediate Release

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**REYES LAUNCHES PLAN TO REDUCE PLASTIC BAG LITTER** - *City Council signs off on partnership with plastics manufacturers to eliminate plastic bags from Los Angeles River, increase recycling*

An anti-litter plan that aims to wipe out plastic bags from City waterways through a partnership with the plastic bags industry was unanimously approved by the City Council today.

“Plastic bags are graffiti in the river,” said Los Angeles City Councilmember Ed P. Reyes, who chairs the Council’s Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River. “Because they do not decompose, this urban litter can linger for years. Plastic bags clog storm drains and waterways, harm birds and other wildlife and blight our community. Working together with the plastics industry we can achieve greater results in the overall goal to reduce and ultimately eliminate plastic from the River.”

Specifically, the City Council adopted the Los Angeles Plastics Industry Task Force Final Report that establishes a partnership with plastic bag manufacturers, environmental groups and retailers.

The report from the City’s Bureau of Sanitation calls for the following:

- Direct City staff to assess possible funding sources for an “Adopt-a-River Program” for the clean-up, maintenance, improvement and education of the Los Angeles River.
- Establish a Citywide public education campaign to reduce plastic bag use.
- Launch a pilot anti-litter program in partnership with the City to identify trash hot spots and assess solutions, such as screens and inserts, to filter plastic bags from City waterways.
- Develop a marketing plan to encourage the public to recycle plastic bags.

The report is part of a greater City plan to revitalize the Los Angeles River. On Sept. 9, the City launched the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, a community-driven project that focuses on renewing a 32-mile stretch of the 51-mile Los Angeles River.

“The Plastic report offers recommendations on how we can meet federal mandates to clean the environment and make the Los Angeles River a place where our families and children can visit,” Reyes said.

Today's Council action comes in response to 2004 findings by the Bureau of Sanitation that concluded plastics, predominantly bags, are the single greatest component of urban litter.

On February 9, 2005 the City created the Los Angeles River Plastic Industry Task Force and directed the team to provide solutions to reduce plastic bag use.

The movement to reduce and recycle plastic litter coincides with the enactment of environmental mandates for stormwater and solid wastes.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) regulations are being imposed through the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board. A TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant, such as trash and bacteria, that can be discharged into a water body and still meet water quality standards.

The trash TMDL requires 10% reduction per year on the trash discharges to the Los Angeles River and Ballona Creek. Compliance points for the Los Angeles River include a 20% reduction of trash by 2005 and a 100% trash reduction to be achieved in 2013.