



PRESS RELEASE

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

by the offices of LA County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis and Supervisor Sheila Kuehl

County adopts green rating system to gauge improvements

In a vote that effectively sets a new standard for infrastructure improvement in Los Angeles County, the LA County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted the Envision rating system, County Supervisors Hilda L. Solis and Sheila Kuehl announced today.

The Envision rating system, developed by the non-profit Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI), is used by municipal agencies and private companies across the nation and has been championed for years by the LA County Public Works department. The system provides a holistic framework for evaluating and rating the community, environmental and economic benefits of all types and sizes of infrastructure projects, and establishes a common language that helps define sustainable infrastructure opportunities for communities.

“As a major provider of regional infrastructure—from water to transportation systems and beyond—the County has the opportunity and responsibility to build infrastructure in a way that improves the environment, public health, and the quality of life for residents,” reads a Board motion co-authored by Solis and Kuehl.

“Adopting a single green rating system for infrastructure projects could help ensure that sustainability practices are consistently and thoughtfully incorporated in this critical area, while also resulting in infrastructure projects that are less expensive to maintain over the long term.”

The Envision framework will be implemented now for all phases of County infrastructure improvement, including planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance. It was already in use for plans to improve Rosemead Boulevard, a major thoroughfare that traverses Whittier Narrows and a number of unincorporated communities in the San Gabriel Valley. The project will transform the heavily-trafficked highway with landscaping, bike lanes, bioswales and street calming measures to complement an existing 1,492-acre park.

Another example is the County's Sun Valley Watershed Multi-Benefit Project, which received ISI's highest recognition, the Platinum Award, in 2014.

"The Sun Valley project received the ISI Envision Platinum award because of its high levels of restorative qualities applied in a previously underdeveloped area," said ISI President and CEO William Bertera. "Sun Valley's high rating also reflects remarkable innovation—not only does the project mitigate flooding in an area that has historically had issues with severe floods, but it also retains storm water in a manner that fulfills local water needs and reduces storm water pollution all at the same time," Bertera said.

The project improved the health of the watershed and increased the wildlife habitat, all while maximizing the opportunities of an existing park and improving the quality of life for local residents.

Similar to the County's previously adopted standards for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building construction and Low Impact Development, Envision will drive sustainable infrastructure development throughout the County.

"The Board has shown tremendous leadership in adopting Envision as a standard for County infrastructure projects," said Public Works Director Gail Farber.

"Through training, outreach, and collaboration with our partner cities and other public agencies, we hope to see its widespread adoption by the County's construction and small business communities, Farber said.

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