

Metro Los Angeles River Path Project

Frequently Asked Questions

LA River Path Project

What is the LA River Path Project?

The Los Angeles River Path project is a proposed 8-mile shared-use bicycle and pedestrian path extension between Elysian Valley and Maywood, through downtown Los Angeles and the City of Vernon. The project aims to create a safe, accessible path for people walking, bicycling, and rolling to get to destinations that matter in their daily lives.

The Project will close an existing gap in the Los Angeles River Bike Path and Greenway Trail, providing a seamless 32-mile bicycle and pedestrian route from the San Fernando Valley to Long Beach.

The new path will serve communities in Elysian Valley, Lincoln Heights, Chinatown, Downtown LA, the Arts District, the Industrial District, Boyle Heights, and the cities of Vernon and Maywood.

Why are we doing this?

Over 1,000,000 people live within three miles of the LA River Path project corridor. Of the 85,000 people who live within ½-mile of the project corridor, 21% of working-age people (approximately 18,000) walk, bicycle or take transit to work. The Project will provide an off-street commute option that will provide access to large employment centers, public transit and provide a safer, more comfortable environment.

Project Funding

How much will this project cost and how will it be funded?

This project is fully funded through construction with \$365 million dollars in funding from Measure M.

What is Measure M?

Measure M is a half-cent sales tax that was approved by Los Angeles County voters in 2016. The funds are being collected for designated transportation purposes including several new transit and highway projects around the County.

The LA River Path project is one of the transportation projects specifically identified in Measure M.

Project Schedule

LA River Path Project Timeline

- 2016
 - Feasibility Study Completed
- 2018-2019
 - Technical Studies & Conceptual Design
- 2019-2023
 - Environmental Clearance & Design
- As early as 2023
 - Construction begins
- 2027
 - Forecasted Opening

When will the project be constructed?

Construction is anticipated to begin around 2023 and be completed before the 2028 Olympics.

Why does the project not open until late 2020s?

The area in which Metro is designing this new path is a complex space. In addition to the challenges of designing a safe path in a constrained industrial area, Metro must coordinate with the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, the City of Vernon, and the US Army Corps of Engineers to study the project's potential environmental impacts, as required by state and federal laws. This process takes several years to accomplish thoroughly before we can begin construction and will require permits from the US Army Corps of Engineers. Therefore, to ensure the project will serve the needs of local neighborhoods and the region in the future, it is important to engage communities now in the design process (even if it is early).

Conceptual Path Design

Where is the path going to be?

The exact location of the path, also called an “alternative”, has not been determined yet. Three draft alternatives were presented to the public in May 2019. A link to the presentation can be found [here](#). Some new structures may be needed to support the path and the path could, in some places, be carved into the existing channel walls.

Who is going to use this path?

This path is meant to be used by anyone who wants to use an off-street walking or bicycling connection between the San Fernando Valley and Long Beach or anywhere in between. Recreational bicycle riders will no doubt use this path — as they do the existing sections of the river path. Those commuting to work and school will have access to DTLA (our region's largest job center), Boyle Heights, Chinatown, Little Tokyo the Arts District and Industrial districts, not to mention places along the entire path including Vernon, Long Beach, the Elysian Valley, Glendale, Atwater, etc.

The design of the path will be focused on creating a space where both people walking on the path as well as bicycle riders of various levels of experience feel comfortable and safe. This path is meant to be used by all ages and abilities who would like to make a connection between the San Fernando Valley and Long Beach or anywhere in between.

How is the project going to keep people walking safe? What about people who ride bicycles fast?

Metro is designing this project for all ages and abilities to promote walking, bicycling, or rolling, such as in a wheelchair or riding a scooter. Metro is implementing best practices for creating a path that not only *feels* safe but *is* safe for all users. Specific design solutions, such as the width of the path and whether there will be separate paths for walking and rolling, will be determined as Metro continues gathering community input and analyzing the existing conditions.

How is the river path going to connect to communities?

The LA River Path will provide greater accessibility to communities to encourage more use for everyone. One way that the path becomes accessible is the availability and frequency of access points. The number and location of these future access points is constrained by existing infrastructure and cost. Each access point will need to navigate around existing industrial activities and build new bridge structures to go over active rail lines. Metro will focus design efforts on balancing the design of an excellent path shaped by community input, including key community connections, with available funding.

What are some of the design challenges?

There are several design challenges to the project. For example, the space at the top of the river's concrete banks, where a path would usually go, is constrained by existing infrastructure and limited right-of-way. The future path must navigate thirty bridges, large high-voltage transmission lines; adjacent commuter and freight rail lines, and; the river channel itself, which has vertical walls in some places.

Is Metro going to fix the existing portions of the path?

The scope of this project does not include improvements to any existing portions of path. The City of Los Angeles is working on closing the gaps in the path along the river in the San Fernando Valley. The LA County Department of Public Works and Metro are working together on some improvements to the existing path on the lower LA River.

Ownership, Operations and Maintenance

Who is going to own, operate and maintain the path?

This path crosses multiple jurisdictions and, for the first time, will connect the paths along the upper and lower LA River. Today, the upper and lower sections of the path are managed by the City of Los Angeles and County of Los Angeles. Therefore, as part of this project, Metro is coordinating with these agencies over the next several years to define ownership, operations, and maintenance responsibilities.

Will scooters and skateboards be welcome?

Yes! The idea is to create a path for non-motorized transportation.

Are there going to be bicycles to rent along the path? What about Metro Bike Share or electric scooters?

The services along the path will be determined when the path is closer to opening, but we anticipate that a menu of rental and shared bicycles and scooters will be available.

How is Metro going to keep homeless encampments off the path?

Metro acknowledges LA County is experiencing a homelessness crisis and that this crisis impacts everyone and public spaces, including existing river paths. As design refines over time, we will continue to provide innovative design solutions that will create a safe, accessible path that people can reliably use. Metro is partnering with the local jurisdictions on developing an operations and maintenance plan that will identify ways to enhance the safety and cleanliness of the path. The goal will be to continue to connect people in need to supportive services.

Miscellaneous

Is this project going to include greening, park space, and river restoration?

As a transportation agency, Metro is designing a path that will serve as a safe and accessible transportation option. Metro recognizes that there are several ongoing river restoration efforts. Metro is currently coordinating with the agencies involved with river restoration and aims to not preclude any river restoration work with the LA River Path project. Metro recognizes the neighborhoods around the project area are in need of parks and is coordinating with local jurisdictions on improving access to open space.

How to Get Involved

How can local communities and the public provide input on this project?

Local communities and the public have many ways to participate and provide their input on this project, including:

- Participating in ongoing public meetings
- Requesting a project briefing for your organization or group
- Subscribe to the project database [here](#) to receive updates on upcoming outreach activities and other project-related information

At the beginning of the environmental process, Metro will hold formal scoping meetings and solicit public and agency comments on the project. These scoping meetings provide a great opportunity to learn more about the path and to help inform the possible alternatives, identify the purpose and need of the project, determine major issues for environmental analysis, and identify the project goals and evaluation criteria.

How can I receive updates on the project?

To receive email updates on the project and meeting notices, please visit our project website at metro.net/lariverpath and click on the “**Contact Us**” tab. You can also email the project team at lariverpath@metro.net.