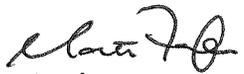


REPORT OF THE CHIEF LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

DATE: October 17, 2017

TO: Honorable Members of the Rules, Elections, and Intergovernmental Relations Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso  Chief Legislative Analyst Council File No.: 17-0002-S118
Assignment No.: 17-09-0921

SUBJECT: Resolution (O'Farrell – Ryu – Price) to SUPPORT legislation or administrative action to secure funding for the completion of the third and final phase of Glendale's Riverwalk project.

CLA RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE the attached Resolution to include in the City's 2017-2018 State Legislative Program, SUPPORT for any legislation or administrative action that would secure \$20 million in funding for the completion of the third and final phase of Glendale's Riverwalk project.

SUMMARY

The Resolution (O'Farrell – Ryu – Price), introduced on September 8, 2017 states that the Army Corp of Engineers released the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Report in 2015. The Report aims to revitalize 11 miles of the Los Angeles River between Griffith Park and Downtown Los Angeles. The Resolution also states that Interstate 5 and the Los Angeles River inhibit access to Griffith Park and the network of bike paths which connect Glendale and the surrounding cities to the Los Angeles corridor. Access is inhibited along a four mile area between Los Feliz Boulevard and the Riverside Drive Bridge. While three bridges span this area, the existing bridges were not built for active transportation.

The Resolution states that the City of Glendale has sponsored the creation of the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk along the Los Angeles River. This project would create additional park space and would promote true ease of access across the River. Efforts are currently underway to secure \$20 million in funding needed to complete the final phase of the Riverwalk project. This phase will include the construction of a bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Los Angeles River and Interstate 5, connecting the Los Angeles bike trail with the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk and the Glendale Bikeway system. The bridge would also provide an alternative means of accessing the Grand Central Creative Campus in Glendale which will ultimately house six million square feet of commercial development and 7,000 new employees. The Resolution seeks support of legislation or administrative action that would secure \$20 million in funding for the completion of the third and final phase of the Glendale Riverwalk project.

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles River begins in Canoga Park, flows through the San Fernando Valley, along the cities of Burbank and Glendale, along Griffith Park and Elysian Park, through Downtown LA

and then through the cities of Vernon, Commerce, Maywood, Bell, Bell Gardens, South Gate, Lynwood, Compton, Paramount, Carson, and Long Beach. In 2002, the City of Los Angeles formed the Ad Hoc Committee on the Los Angeles River, which launched the Revitalization Master Plan in 2007. The current revitalization efforts focus on the 32 mile stretch of the river running from Canoga Park to Downtown Los Angeles. The City is coordinating revitalization efforts and has sought cooperation with other cities adjacent to the river to integrate projects and management objectives. It is estimated that the Los Angeles River projects will produce 18,000 jobs and \$5 billion in development investment over the next decade.

In the 3.25 mile stretch of the River known as the Glendale Narrows, the river bends around Griffith Park and begins to run north-south. However, along the Glendale Narrows, Griffith Park is cut off from the River by the 134 Freeway and Interstate 5. Riverside Drive, running parallel to the River to the intersection of Riverside Drive and Los Feliz Boulevard, forms the longest stretch of the River without a pedestrian crossing. While three bridges currently exist along this stretch, they are intended for vehicles and do not accommodate pedestrians.

The Glendale Narrows Riverwalk spans the north bank of the Los Angeles River and is opposite Griffith Park. The Glendale Narrows Riverwalk project is a critical element of the Los Angeles River Master Plan and consists of three phases. Phase I was completed and opened to the public in 2012. Phase I provides a mile of recreational trails on the north bank of the Los Angeles River, along the narrows and Glendale's border with the River. Further, Phase I also includes two small parks, public art installations, and an equestrian facility.

Phase II is currently underway and includes the design and construction of two parks – Flower Plaza Park and Confluence Park. Flower Plaza Park will connect recently completed bike paths to the north and south. Confluence Park will be located at the southeast end of the Riverwalk project.

Phase III, for which the City of Glendale is seeking funding, will include engineering studies for the construction of bridges spanning the Los Angeles River and Verdugo Wash. The Los Angeles River bridge will connect the Riverwalk bikeway to the Los Angeles River bike trail next to Griffith Park. When Phases II and III are complete, Glendale will be the only city along the Los Angeles River whose entire riverfront is dedicated to recreation.

During the 2011 development of the Phases II and III Master Plan, the City of Glendale conducted extensive outreach with the surrounding communities and with concerned agencies and organizations. Among those consulted were the City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, River Project Office; the Ad Hoc River Committee; and the Department of Recreation and Parks. The City of Glendale also reached out to Council Districts 1, 4, and 13 and conducted site visits for the Councilmembers and their staff. Further, in 2015, Councilmember O'Farrell submitted a letter to the United States Department of Transportation offering his support of the City of Glendale's application for a TIGER grant for the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk Bridges.

In late September, Assemblywoman Laura Friedman (Glendale) helped to potentially secure \$20 million in funding for Phase III. Governor Brown earmarked \$20 million in Senate Bill 5 (De León), the California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access

for All Act of 2018 for the final phase of the Riverwalk. Governor Brown signed SB 5 and the availability of funding now requires voter approval in June 2018. Assemblywoman Friedman was joined by Councilmember Ryu and Mayor Garcetti in her support of the earmark. Completion of the Riverwalk project will provide access to Los Angeles's parks and facilities, linking the resources and communities along this stretch of the river.

Approval of the Resolution is consistent with Council's past efforts to further the development of the Los Angeles River's pedestrian network.

Departments Notified

Bureau of Engineering

Department of Recreation and Parks

LA River Works

Economic and Workforce Development Department



Jennifer Quintanilla
Analyst

Attachments: 1. Resolution

SMT.MF.PS.JMQ

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body must have first been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released the Los Angeles River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Report in 2015, which aims to revitalize 11 miles of the Los Angeles River between Griffith Park and Downtown Los Angeles; and

WHEREAS, Interstate 5 and the Los Angeles River cut off access to Griffith Park and the network of bike paths that connect Glendale and surrounding cities to the Los Angeles corridor for nearly four miles between Los Feliz Boulevard and the Riverside Drive Bridge; and

WHEREAS, the existing bridges on Los Feliz Boulevard and Riverside Drive are narrow, congested, and were never designed to accommodate active transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Glendale has sponsored the creation of the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk along the Los Angeles River to create additional park space and promote ease of access across the Los Angeles River; and

WHEREAS, efforts are underway to secure \$20 million in funding for the completion of the third and final phase of Glendale's Riverwalk project, which will construct a bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Los Angeles River and Interstate 5, thus connecting the Los Angeles bike trail with the Glendale Narrows Riverwalk and the Glendale Bikeway system; and

WHEREAS, the bridge will provide cyclists with a viable and attractive alternative to congested vehicular routes to Griffith Park, such as Interstate 5, State Route 134, and San Fernando Road; and

WHEREAS, the bridge will also provide motorists with an alternative means to access the Grand Central Creative Campus in Glendale, which will ultimately be home to nearly six million square feet of commercial development and up to 7,000 new employees; and

WHEREAS, Los Angeles River projects are estimated to generate up to 18,000 jobs and more than \$5 billion in development investment over the next 10 to 15 years;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2017-2018 State Legislative Program support for any legislation or administrative action that would secure \$20 million in funding for the completion of the third and final phase of Glendale's Riverwalk project.

PRESENTED BY: David Ryu
DAVID RYU
Councilmember, 4th District

Mitch O'Farrell
MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

SEP - 8 2017
cc
[Signature]

SECONDED BY: [Signature]

