

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY

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March 27, 2017

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell
200 N Spring St, Room 480
Los Angeles, CA 90012

&

Councilmember David Ryu
200 N. Spring Street, Room 425
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: Support for Los Angeles River North Atwater Multimodal Bridge project

Dear Honorable Councilmembers O'Farrell and Ryu:

The Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) helps to preserve parkland in both wilderness and urban areas, and works to improve recreational facilities throughout greater Los Angeles. One of the Conservancy's goals is to form an interlinking system of urban parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitat that are easily accessible to the general public.

The Conservancy strongly supports the City of Los Angeles' (City) construction of the North Atwater Bridge project, a new multi-modal bridge that will serve pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists equally. The Los Angeles River (River) bike path is a regional destination trail, however it is hard to access from park-poor communities on the east bank. This project will provide a safe, convenient connection from residential communities on the east side to both the bike path and all the other recreational opportunities such as Griffith Park and the network of River pocket parks. As the River bike path is extended both through downtown and further into the San Fernando Valley, the path will encourage more local residents to utilize the River for recreation and commuting, and will reinforce the River's role as a regional trail connection.

This bridge project is consistent with the *San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watershed and Open Space Plan*, also known as and hereinafter referred to as the "*Common Ground*" plan. The purpose of *Common Ground* is to "articulate a vision for the future of the San Gabriel and Los Angeles Rivers Watersheds" and "provide a framework for future watershed and open space planning." The project is consistent with the following *Common Ground* Guiding Principles: Connect Open Space with a Network of Trails, Establish Riverfront Greenways to Cleanse Water, Hold Floodwaters, and Extend Open Space, Create, Expand and Improve Public Open Space Throughout the Region.

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The Conservancy urges the City to provide the funds needed to begin construction of the bridge and provide this important link to the public. If you have any questions about our support, please contact Rorie Skei at skei@smmc.ca.gov at (310) 589-3200, extension 112.

Sincerely,

IRMA MUÑOZ
Chairperson