

**Board Report**

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**REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
MARCH 24, 2022****Motion by:****DIRECTORS GARCETTI, SOLIS, AND NAJARIAN**

## Link Union Station - Los Angeles River Path Connector Motion

In the coming decade, Metro is poised to deliver Link Union Station (Link US) and the Los Angeles River Path, two generational investments that promise to transform mobility in LA County. Once complete, Link US will revolutionize the rider experience at Union Station and unlock vastly improved regional and intercity rail service throughout the County. Likewise, the LA River Path is the key to a world-class, off-street, continuous active transportation route from the San Fernando Valley to Downtown Long Beach, creating a true opportunity for regional active transportation travel.

In June 2016, Metro's Link US technical team conducted a preliminary study on how to leverage Link US to improve access to the LA River in support of City and County LA River master plans. Additionally, the Board approved a motion in March 2017 (2017-0214; Fasana - Barger - Solis - Dupont-Walker) which included a directive emphasizing the need for direct connections between Union Station and the LA River.

As Metro's Link US and the LA River Path projects each advanced, a leading concept emerged to connect Union Station to the River Path via a direct, off-street connector running generally alongside the Link US rail flyover and with one potential intermediate access point in the Arts District. This connector was environmentally cleared as a Link US design option and, by late 2020, Metro had completed three promising design concepts. The connector is also included as an option in Metro's forthcoming Link US Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) contract.

Thanks to this foresight and early action, the portion of the connector within and adjacent to the Link US project footprint has the potential to be efficiently constructed as part of Link US so long as funding is identified.

The LA River Path has assumed responsibility for design of the connector and design funding was included in the FY22 budget. However, as Link US approaches 35% design, the LA River Path is just now advancing past conceptual design. With Link US preparing its final financial plan and nearing recommendation of its CM/GC contract, the clock is ticking for Metro to take advantage of construction efficiencies made possible by Link US. If Metro does not take advantage of the opportunity to deliver the connector under the Link US CM/GC contract, it risks higher costs, coordination challenges, and other inefficiencies in the years ahead.

Connecting the LA River Path with Union Station with an off-street connection is an obvious mobility objective. Union Station is the single most important public transportation hub in all Southern California, served by a multitude of regional and intercity rail, Metro Rail, and bus services. The LA River Path will serve as a bicycle freeway, creating new opportunities for trips of all types to be taken by foot and cycle in a low-stress environment. Connecting the two projects will make them greater than the sum of their parts. Not connecting the two projects with a facility usable to all ages would be an indefensible missed opportunity.

**SUBJECT: LINK UNION STATION - LOS ANGELES RIVER PATH CONNECTOR MOTION**

**RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE Motion by Directors Garcetti, Solis, and Najarian that the Board direct the CEO to:

- A. Continue taking all steps necessary to ensure the Link US - LA River Path Connector can be developed and constructed efficiently as part of the Link US CM/GC contract, including but not limited to syncing design, permitting, and construction of the connector with design, permitting, and construction of Link US;
- B. Develop a funding strategy for the connector, including consideration of Measure M LA River Path and Measure M 2% (active transportation) funding as local match for state and federal active transportation grant opportunities;
- C. Should it prove infeasible to deliver the connector as part of the Link US CM/GC contract, include in the scope for the LA River Path Project an off-street connector between the River Path and Union Station to maximize sustainable transportation network connectivity;
- D. Engage with community and active transportation stakeholders about an off-street connection between Union Station and the LA River Path project; and
- E. Report back on the above as part of the next Link US and LA River Path Board reports.