



Board Report

File #: 2026-0416, File Type: Motion / Motion Response

Agenda Number: 46.

REVISED
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
MAY 28, 2026

Motion by:

DIRECTORS BASS, SOLIS, HORVATH, HAHN, AND PADILLA

Governance, Delivery, and Operation Options for the LA River Path Project Motion

The LA River Path project is a critical regional investment that will close the longest remaining gap in the 51-mile LA River Path, creating a continuous active mobility corridor that connects communities, enhances access to transit, and advances regional climate, health, and equity goals. Metro is the current lead agency for the Downtown LA River Path project and owns significant small, insignificant portions of right-of-way within the project limits. ~~This Metro-owned~~ Right-of-way is essential to advancing design, permitting, and construction, and underscores the need for a coordinated governance and delivery structure to efficiently steward the project through completion and into long-term operations.

Given the project's complexity-multiple jurisdictions, varied right-of-way ownership, environmental permitting, and long-term operations and maintenance needs-identifying the most effective governance, delivery, and stewardship model is necessary to ensure timely and cost-effective implementation. A governance structure that is clear, empowered, and aligned across Metro, the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), the City of Los Angeles, and other regional partners may accelerate project delivery, improve operational outcomes, and support sustainable long-term maintenance of both the Downtown LA River Path and the full 51-mile LA RiverWay system.

Metro is the current lead agency for the project; however, a different "Project Client" may offer faster design, construction, and cohesive operational benefits to the communities along the LA River path and to the users of the LA River path. Alternative models include: a new or existing Joint Powers Authority, an existing governmental agency, or a new purpose-built governmental authority. Confirming a Project Client, ~~whether Metro or an alternative~~, and a responsible party for long-term operations and maintenance, is a key step to facilitating project development. It may also ease the process of securing the right-of-way, which is vital for effective and cost-efficient project delivery.

Metro has the funding but not staff capacity to engage a consultant to research and report on governance models, project delivery and contracting options, operations and maintenance models, and processes under the laws of the State of California to establish authorities and identify funding

flows. Because multiple Cities, Los Angeles County, the LACFCD, Metro, and other State and local agencies and Conservancies are stakeholders in the project's long-term success, inform this effort, a formal study is needed to inform the appropriate Governance Structure.

While Metro currently has limited staff resources to undertake a comprehensive governance and delivery study, the LACFCD, with its long standing expertise on the LA River and its established working relationships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is better suited to lead this effort, in partnership with the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and LA Metro. The LACFCD's technical, regulatory, and interagency experience positions it to effectively coordinate the study and evaluate governance models, delivery pathways, and long-term operations and maintenance structures.

Metro will provide all necessary funding, project documents, technical information, and review support, and will continue to play an active and engaged role throughout the study's development. Metro will collaborate fully with the LACFCD, County, and City and will support the recommendations and implementation steps that emerge from this work, ensuring long-term participation and funding commitments consistent with Metro's role as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency.

SUBJECT: GOVERNANCE, DELIVERY, AND OPERATION OPTIONS FOR THE LA RIVER PATH PROJECT MOTION

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE Motion by Bass, Solis, Horvath, Hahn, and Padilla that the Board directs the Chief Executive Officer or her designee to:

Enter into all necessary agreements and subsequent amendments with the County of Los Angeles, the LACFCD, and/or the City of Los Angeles to carry out the LA River Path Governance Model Study, and to fully reimburse the County of Los Angeles, the LACFCD, and/or the City of Los Angeles for the full cost of the study.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board directs the CEO to have the Metro staff collaborate with the County of Los Angeles, the LACFCD, the City of Los Angeles, and all relative stakeholders including the United States Army Corps of Engineers, on the LA River Path Governance Model Study by providing all requested project-related information, technical expertise, right-of-way data, and review support, and by serving as a committed partner throughout the development and implementation of the study's recommendations. The study shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements:

- A. Governance: Review best practices from other regions and report with recommendations on suitable models, options, and processes, including:
 - 1. Identifying a Project Client for development, delivery, and operation;
 - 2. Using an existing agency or authority as the Project Client;
 - 3. Creating a new Joint Powers Authority (JPA), including recommendations for optimal

membership and roles;

4. Establishing a new authority or agency through existing or new State legislation, including the creation of a Climate Resilience District, to serve as the Project Client, operator or both; and
 5. Retaining Metro's current role as the Project's developer, builder, and partner in operation;
- B. Project Delivery: Study alternative delivery models to benefit the project, such as Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM) and other innovative procurement approaches.
- C. Operations and Maintenance: Research and report on operations and maintenance models, including:
1. An initial model for meeting operations and maintenance needs of the Downtown LA River Path project, including security, public safety, graffiti abatement, routine maintenance, and long-term structural inspection and repair; and
 2. A model for a unified operations and maintenance program for the entire 51-mile LA River Path (the "LARiverWay"), and how it may relate to delivery of the Downtown LA River Path project;
- D. Sustainable Funding: Develop recommendations for existing and potential new funding sources for the sustainable long-term stewardship of the Downtown LA River Path project and/or the entire 51-mile LARiverWay, including:
1. Realigning funding formulas for existing active transportation funding sources, such as TDA Article 3;
 2. Opportunities to address active transportation operations and maintenance funding in the Measure M decennial review process;
 3. New local or regional levies based on funding models for similar active transportation infrastructure in other jurisdictions; and
 4. Potential operational revenue, such as filming, special events, sponsorship, and advertising;
- E. Stakeholder Engagement: Engage with various agencies and project stakeholders to inform the research described above and the collaborative roles for delivery and operation.