

To: Members of the Public Works Committee, City of Los Angeles
Re: Council File 11-1246-S1

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing to provide comments on the Bike/Ped/Equestrian Atwater Bridge project being heard in committee today. My comments are in reference to Council File 11-1246-S1.

I am a project manager at the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation and one of the authors on the Luskin Center's report, titled "Creating a Complete Los Angeles River Greenway for All: Stories and Guidance."

In our report, we focus on the Los Angeles River greenway. The LA River and its greenway are now center stage in discussions of open space and recreation, active transportation, regional watershed management, ecosystem restoration, climate resilience, and public art transforming the Los Angeles region. The City of Los Angeles has led much of the revitalization effort and the work has been exciting and transformative. In particular, a complete Los Angeles River greenway has the potential to provide numerous social, health, transportation, and environmental benefits for the region. A complete LA River greenway as an active transportation, open space, and recreational corridor involves a network along both sides of the 51-mile river of: community access points; parks and other green spaces; pedestrian, bike, and equestrian paths; and bridges for non-motorized use. A complete LA River greenway provides parks and trails for exercise, bike paths for commuting, bridges for connecting communities, and places to stop, meet friends, or observe wildlife.

Bridges, like the one proposed today, are a critical component of a complete greenway. They offer many benefits, including:

- **Mobility and Safety:** Footbridges can create a continuous, uninterrupted, and secure active transportation network along the LA River greenway. They also link adjacent neighborhoods and broader communities that have been historically disconnected.
- **Accessibility to Economic and Social Centers:** Bridges provide community members with access to important destinations such as transit stations, schools, parks, employment centers, and shopping districts.
- **Aesthetics:** By including artistic elements in construction designs, bridges can enhance user experience by improving the aesthetics of the LA River greenway or even become a destination in and of themselves. Design and artistic elements can be created by local community members strengthening community identity and pride.
- **Health:** Many LA River-adjacent communities are heavily burdened with environmental hazards, and thus have much to gain from the physical and mental health benefits of safe and continuous river pathways, which include increased physical activity, active commuting, contact with nature, and community connectedness.



Eric (Roderico) Villanueva <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Council File 11-1246-S1 - Atwater Village Bridge = SUPPORT FOR LA River North Atwater Multimodal Bridge

1 message

Will Wright <will@aialosangeles.org>

Mon, May 22, 2017 at 12:56 PM

To: councilmember.ofarrell@lacity.org, adam.lid@lacity.org, john.white@lacity.org, eric.villanueva@lacity.org, Amy Ablakat <amy.ablakat@lacity.org>, Christine Peters <christine.peters@lacity.org>, Chris Robertson <chris.robertson@lacity.org>

Councilmember Joe Buscaino, Chair, Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee (Attn: John White)

Councilmember Mike Bonin, Chair Transportation Committee (Attn: Adam Lid)

Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, Council District #13,

As the Director of Government & Public Affairs for the Los Angeles chapter of The American Institute of Architects, I **am writing to share my strong SUPPORT for the proposed LA River North Atwater Multimodal Bridge and I advocate for the cable-stay bridge design as recommended by River LA.**

It is vital to fund this important connection across the Los Angeles River and it is equally vital that the design of this bridge serves to represent the stature and the dignity of what the Los Angeles River means to all Angelenos and a symbolic narrative uniting us more closely together.

Therefore I recommend that you allocate from the Public Works Trust Fund the \$6,933,133 necessary to build the cable-stay bridge as soon as possible.

The cable-stay bridge design responds to every goal and requirement that was presented throughout the community outreach and engagement process:

- Mixed-modal: It safely accommodates pedestrians, equestrians and bicyclists.
- The bridge is future proof and flexible to accommodate uses that have yet to be identified.
- The structure addresses sometimes contradictory multi-agency requirements.
- The design solves the very real concerns about river safety by creating as minimal an impact on the river as possible. In this case, placing a robust structure above the deck, out of harm's way instead of in the channel.
- The design responds to the unique needs of this community and the specific condition of this location. No simple or off the shelf solution exists.

I thank you for your leadership on this issue and on your strong commitment to make sure that Los Angeles remains a healthy and vibrant place to live, work and play.

Very truly yours,

Will Wright, Hon. AIA|LA

Director, Government and Public Affairs

AIA Los Angeles

3780 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 701

Los Angeles, CA 90010

213.639.0764 office

310.309.9580 mobile

213.639.0767 fax

will@aialosangeles.org

www.aialosangeles.org

Subscribe to the AIA|LA Newsletter



Eric (Roderico) Villanueva <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

North Atwater Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge

1 message

Jimmy Nghe <jimmynghe@gmail.com>

Mon, May 22, 2017 at 11:09 AM

To: adam.lid@lacity.org, john.white@lacity.org, eric.villanueva@lacity.org

5/22/17

RE: Council File 11-1246-S1

Dear Esteemed Members of the Council Committee,

I would like to express my support for the North Atwater Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge. I am a cyclist and I ride through this area of the LA River often. This bridge would allow for safe access across the River in an area where there are no safe options for cyclists or pedestrians to cross. Often times I see kids crossing the water. I have had to do this a few times myself and I can attest that the rocks are slippery and could be dangerous at times. I have had conversations with many other cyclists who would benefit greatly from the bridge and are excited about the project. Furthermore, I see a great deal of elderly people and people with small children who like to walk along the path of the river in areas where there is access (some examples are Frogtown, Glendale Bridge and Sunnynook). I see very few of these patrons in North Atwater because they do not have any access to it. I feel that these residents would enjoy walking along the river if they had a practical way of accessing the river path. The fact that there is no access cuts off these residents from a very useful resource that is directly beneficial to their health.

In addition to cycling I am also an avid fly fisherman and would consider the LA River my home water. I have spent numerous hours walking up and down the banks looking for carp. Over the years I have seen the numbers of fisherman multiply in the area. I have even met people who have come from outside of Southern California, such as Northern California and states such as Colorado, Oregon and Utah, who have come to fish in the LA River. It has become a popular stop over spot for fishing tourist because of its reputation as a great carp fishery. The bridge would greatly benefit all the fisherman as well by supplying a safe way to get from one side of the river to the other giving it access to wide array of recreation. It would also show a sense of pride that the city has for one of its greatest natural resources, showing that the City of LA deems the LA River worthy of investment and protection.

Please give serious consideration into continuing with the completion of the North Atwater Bike and Pedestrian Bridge.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Nghe

2115 Fair Park Ave

Los Angeles, CA 90041



Eric (Roderico) Villanueva <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Support Letter for Council File 11-1246-S1 (North Atwater Bridge)

3 messages

Marissa Christiansen <marissa@folar.org>

Sun, May 21, 2017 at 2:33 PM

To: "adam.lid@lacity.org" <adam.lid@lacity.org>, "john.white@lacity.org" <john.white@lacity.org>, "eric.villanueva@lacity.org" <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Cc: Michael Affeldt <michael.affeldt@lacity.org>, Stephen Mejia <smejia@folar.org>

Dear Adam, John and Eric,

Please find the attached letter of support for the North Atwater Bridge ahead of the Public Works Committee meeting scheduled tomorrow.

Best,

Marissa



Marissa Christiansen

Executive Director

570 West Avenue 26, Suite 250

Los Angeles, CA 90065

323 - 223 - 0585 marissa@folar.org

www.folar.org



North Atwater Bridge Letter of Support Council File 11-1246-S1.pdf

528K

Marissa Christiansen <marissa@folar.org>

Sun, May 21, 2017 at 9:23 PM

To: "adam.lid@lacity.org" <adam.lid@lacity.org>, "john.white@lacity.org" <john.white@lacity.org>, "eric.villanueva@lacity.org" <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Cc: Michael Affeldt <michael.affeldt@lacity.org>, Stephen Mejia <smejia@folar.org>

Adam, John and Eric,

Please allow me to rescind the previously attached letter for Council File 11-1246-S1, as we are making revisions. We do not want the current version on file. Thank you.

Best,

Marissa

**Marissa Christiansen**

Executive Director

570 West Avenue 26, Suite 250

Los Angeles, CA 90065

323 - 223 - 0585 ✉ marissa@folar.org

🌐 www.folar.org



From: Marissa Christiansen**Sent:** Sunday, May 21, 2017 2:33 PM**To:** 'adam.lid@lacity.org' <adam.lid@lacity.org>; 'john.white@lacity.org' <john.white@lacity.org>; 'eric.villanueva@lacity.org' <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>**Cc:** 'Michael Affeldt' <michael.affeldt@lacity.org>; Stephen Mejia <smejia@folar.org>**Subject:** Support Letter for Council File 11-1246-S1 (North Atwater Bridge)

[Quoted text hidden]

Marissa Christiansen <marissa@folar.org>

Mon, May 22, 2017 at 9:45 AM

To: "adam.lid@lacity.org" <adam.lid@lacity.org>, "john.white@lacity.org" <john.white@lacity.org>, "eric.villanueva@lacity.org" <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>**Cc:** Michael Affeldt <michael.affeldt@lacity.org>, Stephen Mejia <smejia@folar.org>

Adam, John, and Eric,

Our revised comment letter for Council File 11-1246-S1 is attached here. If you could make sure this is the version that is recorded it would be much appreciated.

Many thanks.

Marissa

From: Marissa Christiansen**Sent:** Sunday, May 21, 2017 9:24 PM**To:** 'adam.lid@lacity.org' <adam.lid@lacity.org>; 'john.white@lacity.org' <john.white@lacity.org>; 'eric.villanueva@lacity.org' <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>**Cc:** 'Michael Affeldt' <michael.affeldt@lacity.org>; Stephen Mejia <smejia@folar.org>**Subject:** RE: Support Letter for Council File 11-1246-S1 (North Atwater Bridge)

[Quoted text hidden]



North Atwater Bridge Letter of Support Council File 11-1246-S1.pdf

414K



May 22, 2017

re: North Atwater Bridge, Council File 11-1246-S1

Dear Members of the City Council,

On behalf of Friends of the Los Angeles River, I write to you today in support of the North Atwater Bridge for its iconic design and as a model for garnering private investment in River improvements. For 30 years, Friends of the Los Angeles River has advocated for improved and expanded public access to and in a restored River, as well as the investment and cross-agency support it will take to make that happen. The North Atwater Bridge is a timely step towards a future River that is accessible and vibrant.

While concerns around cost and design have warranted past discussion and exploration, we believe the precedent-setting benefits the bridge offers outweighs them. The River deserves creative design and will need private investment to accomplish the level of restoration we are all pushing towards. To let this opportunity pass would hamper us all – NGOs and City government alike – from creating the innovative partnerships upon which the River's future relies.

As you move this project towards completion, please consider the need for improved conditions in and connectivity to the tunnel under Interstate 5, which will maximize the potential of connectivity and accessibility the bridge will offer. Furthermore, we have also supported a bridge in the City of Glendale, proposed at a site not far from the North Atwater Bridge. We encourage the City of Los Angeles to coordinate with the City of Glendale to be sure these two bridges ultimately support and complement one another.

Finally, this project and the process for it was a meaningful case study for partnership, funding, and community engagement on the River. Longstanding community members and community-based organizations like ourselves and so many others offer an important perspective in River restoration. As progress on the River advances at a quickening pace, consistent and thorough community engagement will be even more important. We encourage continued public involvement in this project as it moves forward and in future River revitalization projects to come.

With that, we thank the City for its leadership in River revitalization and offer our congratulations on this provocative new bridge. We look forward to a more connected and accessible Los Angeles River for all.

Sincerely,

Marissa Christiansen
Executive Director



Eric (Roderico) Villanueva <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Council File 11-1246-S1 - Atwater Village Bridge

1 message

Damian Robledo <damian.g.robledo@gmail.com>

Mon, May 22, 2017 at 1:42 AM

To: adam.lid@lacity.org, john.white@lacity.org, eric.villanueva@lacity.org

Dear Sirs,

I live, work and play on the Los Angeles River. I feel fortunate to live in Atwater Village and would like to voice my support of a multi modal bridge linking North Atwater to Griffith Park. As a 10 year resident in North Atwater Village, I see great value in creating additional access along and across the LA River. As traffic increases in the City, the bridge represents an opportunity for alternative transportation modes to be used to commute in and around Los Angeles linking existing biking infrastructure, horse trails and a future East Bank Riverway pedestrian path now in the planning stages.

Furthermore, the symbolic nature of the bridge at the Glendale Narrows Portion - the 11 miles of various wildlife and greenery will enhance the preservation of the river ecosystems by keeping horses and people up and away from disturbing the fragile ecosystems in the area, since now horses and people traverse the water to make the same connection.

With the US Army Corp barriers hindering access to the River, specifically at North Atwater Park where a monument from President Barack Obama commemorates the river as one of America's great waterways and even expresses the goal of "more unobstructed access" to the River, this bridge will bring more accessibility, more use of North Atwater Park, more stitching of communities together, and expanding the emerald green belt of parks and open space envisioned by the Olmsted-Bartholomew Plan for the Los Angeles Region which laid out a goal of traversing Los Angeles not by car, but by foot.

Lastly, there is an ongoing battle in Los Angeles to define and capture urban space -- with calls for more density and others championing preservation. This bridge will literally create a new urban space, and will be useful for redevelopment of North Atwater City Yards, but also creating more access for residents to the expansive Griffith Park and all its amenities. Furthermore, the bridge itself accesses heretofore unusable open space - above the LA River.

I therefore would like to urge Public Works Committee to provide the \$6.9 million in funds to allow this project to begin in June 2017.

I would also like to see a frugal management of construction funds by the BOE.

I hope that more bridges will be constructed as small scale access ways like Sunnynook Bridge and other existing bridges be rehabilitated and repaired rather than be demolished in order to attain federal highway funds for new, bland car-oriented bridges.

Thank you,

Damian Robledo
damian.g.robledo@gmail.com

Fran Reichenbach
2751 Westshire Dr
Los Angeles, CA 90068
323-610-1967

May 21, 2017

Arts Parks and Rivers Committee

Re: **Council file #11-1246-S1**

Dear Councilmember O'Farrell & Honorable Members of Arts, Parks & Rivers Cmte,

I'm writing to add my voice in support of the modest prefabricated bridge plan to create a safe connection for horses and for pedestrians across the L.A. River. Please include me in any updates or hearings planned in regard to this bridge proposal.

My daughter had a horse at Verdant Stables many years ago (Now Atwater Stables) and had some serious close calls taking her horse across that slippery algae-ridden river to get to the wonderful trails in Griffith Park.

We are planning on boarding our three horses at the Atwater Stables starting in July 2017 and count the days – months – years(?) until this new simple prefabricated bridge is approved and built.

Please do add this letter to the council file.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fran Reichenbach', with a stylized, cursive script.

Fran Reichenbach

Cc: Lynn Brown & eric.villanueva@lacity.org



Eric (Roderico) Villanueva <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Council File 11-1246-S1

1 message

Sheila Irani <sheilairani@gmail.com>

Sun, May 21, 2017 at 12:30 PM

To: adam.lid@lacity.org, john.white@lacity.org, "Eric (Roderico) Villanueva" <eric.villanueva@lacity.org>

Cc: michael.affeldt@lacity.org

Please include for Council File 11-1246-S1
Support for the North Atwater Bridge
Hearing, May 22 at 1pm

The project will deliver on the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan (project 142), will accept a generous multi-million dollar gift from the La Kretz family for public infrastructure, provide important safe access to the bicycle, pedestrian and equestrians accessing Griffith Park from Atwater Village, and allow for the investment of the State's \$3.6M in ATP funds which will be lost if the project is not approved.

Attached is my letter of support.

Best,

Sheila Irani

Former Director of Special Projects,
Councilmember Tom LaBonge, CD4

--

"A candle loses nothing of its light by lighting another candle." Anonymous



LA RIVER.docx

14K

DATE: May 21, 2017

TO: adam.lid@lacity.org
john.white@lacity.org
eric.villanueva@lacity.org

FROM: Sheila Irani
Former Director, Special Projects CD4, Councilman LaBonge

REFERENCE: Council File 11-1246-S1

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to strongly support the City's construction of the North Atwater Bridge, a critical public access point across the Los Angeles River to Griffith Park that serves all non-motorized modes equally: pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists.

The Los Angeles River bike path is a regional destination, however, it is hard to access from communities on the east bank of the river. This bridge will provide a safe, convenient connection from residential communities on the east side to both the bike path and all the other recreational opportunities in Griffith Park. Working for Councilman LaBonge, I worked with the communities affected by the lack of connectivity they experienced and the LARRC (now LA RIVER) in creating a solid solution that would have long lasting impact and serve as a memorable landmark. Councilman LaBonge decided to fund the EIR along with then Councilmember Garcetti from CD13 with their respective discretionary funds in the hope of seeing this vision be constructed.

The importance for the equestrian community to avoid going into the River to cross into Griffith Park as well as cyclists and pedestrians to join the LA RIVER bike/ped path or enter Griffith Park has been noted by community leaders from all these groups, and the decision to invest discretionary funds from two council offices to begin the process of building this bridge was made with an eye to the future when the LA RIVER will be the vital open space and recreation area it should be. The design was to be memorable but practical in that it allows for both equestrians and cyclists to cross safely.

After all these years, I am happy to see it is in the final leg of approval, and I do hope that the Councilmembers will support this vision for the River and the constituents of this City who want to escape our reliance on the automobile, exercise and enjoy the LA River and Griffith Park. I think it will become a centerpiece from which more infrastructure will be developed to promote and increase the value of these areas for the benefit of all.

I believe the North Atwater Bridge project will greatly benefit my community and so I urge the City to provide the remaining funds needed to begin construction of this project right away. If you have any questions about my support, I can be reached at 323-793-7868.

Sincerely,

Sheila Irani