MOTION ARTS, PARKS, & CITY FACILITIES

Segment 8 of the LARiverWay is one of the nine segments identified by the Bureau of Engineering as part of its LARiverWay Valley Completion Project, which is informed by the 2017 Los Angeles River Valley Bikeway and Greenway Design Completion Project Feasibility Study Report. Awarded $34M in Active Transportation Program (ATP) Cycle 7 funding, Segment 8 runs from Whitsett Avenue to Lankershim Boulevard and is entering the design phase. The project will complete the buildout of an off-street active transportation pathway along with associated crossings and elements like lighting, trash, landscaping, and other elements.

The beginning of Segment 8 at Whitsett Avenue is a very involved location that requires a deep and holistic look at both the immediate surroundings as well as Whitsett Avenue itself, due to the presence of a destination on each "quadrant" of the Whitsett Avenue bridge over the Los Angeles River, including a slower-paced more pedestrian-focused pathway (the LA River Greenway), and a slightly faster-paced bicycle-focused, but pedestrian friendly, pathway (The LARiverWay) and the need to thoughtfully connect them all. The northwest "quadrant" features the Zev Yaroslavsky LA River Greenway and will feature the Harvard-Westlake River Park, set to open soon, the southwest "quadrant" will feature the commercial plaza of the Riverwalk development, which will also include 800 units, the northeast "quadrant" features a church and a residential neighborhood, and the southeast "quadrant" features the LA River Studio City Greenway and the heart of the Studio City commercial village. The crossing will need to accommodate people biking, walking, and needing to cross from the southwest "quadrant" to the northeast "quadrant" for the LARiverWay, as well as from the northwest "quadrant" to the southeast "quadrant" to connect the Zev Yaroslavsky LA River Greenway west of Whitsett Avenue, along with the existing segment of LA River Studio City Greenway east of Whitsett Avenue.

The design of such a complicated crossing and entrypoint for four separate segments of pathway will likely engender changes at nearby intersections due to the extreme proximity of the Los Angeles River to the existing intersection of Whitsett Avenue / Ventura Boulevard. The design of the crossing(s) may engender necessary design changes along Whitsett Avenue itself, behooving the City to seek a holistic vision for Whitsett Avenue for the entire segment from Ventura Boulevard to Moorpark Street. In addition, the development of a new residential and commercial destination at Riverwalk calls for more access to the LARiverWay, including new ramp(s), stair(s), or both, alongside an expanded welcome plaza at the northwest corner of the intersection of Whitsett Avenue / Valleyheart Drive South to accommodate more people walking, biking, and co-mingling.

The Bureau of Engineering has selected a consultant for the design of Segment 8 and the issuance of the Notice to Proceed is expected later in October or 2026. In order to properly plan and design this crucial keystone of the Studio City area and the larger LARiverWay network, the Bureau of Engineering should expand the scope of Segment 8 to include both a Whitsett Avenue segment, including all crossings and associated features, as well as a western segment west of Whitsett Avenue including new ramp(s), stair(s) and other civil and landscaping improvements.

For the Harvard-Westlake River Park, the lack of clarity due to a lack of a finalized design has confounded their attempts to complete a B Permit for improvements in the public right of way, including a new crossing of Whitsett Avenue at Valleyheart Drive North. As a result, Harvard-Westlake worked with the Bureau of Engineering and the Department of Transportation to contribute $750,000 for the completion of said crossing by the City while completing all of its other B Permit elements. These funds can go towards helping design and construct that crossing and any and all associated elements.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council INSTRUCT the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) to request a change order for the design scope of the LARiverWay Segment 8 project to incorporate a more holistic look at Whitsett Avenue, including the intersections of Whitsett/Ventura, and Whitsett/Moorpark and everything in between. This should also include the proposed crossing at Valleyheart Drives North and South to connect to the existing LARiverWay and Zev Yaroslavsky LA River Greenway west of Whitsett Avenue, along with the existing segment of LA River Studio City Greenway east of Whitsett Avenue. The new design scope should also include placing new access points to the existing section of the LARiverWay along the Riverwalk development west of Whitsett Avenue, such as a ramp, stairs, or both along with landscaping. The change order should guide the contractor to designing three separate construction-bid packages for this area: one for west of Whitsett Avenue,

for the area currently operated and managed by the Department of Recreation and Parks; one for Whitsett Avenue from Ventura Boulevard to Moorpark Street including new crossings, traffic signal modifications, striping, and active transportation; and the last being the LARiverWay Segment 8 pathway east of Whitsett Avenue.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council REQUEST the Department of Recreation and Parks to assist the Bureau of Engineering and its consultants on the design of new ramp(s), stair(s), and landscaping for the existing portion of the LARiverWay west of Whitsett Avenue, and thereafter to seek construction funding to implement the improvements in the area under their control under an existing use agreement with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council REQUEST the Department of Transportation to assist the Bureau of Engineering and its consultants on the design of the crossing(s) of Whitsett Avenue at the Los Angeles River, as well as with design questions for nearby intersections, including evaluating them for Left Turn phasing and other safety improvements, and all associated striping.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council AUTHORIZE the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) to accept a contribution in the amount of $750,000 from the Harvard-Westlake School to support BOE's civil and traffic engineering and landscape design work, and construction thereafter, for the following subset of additional scope elements for the LARiverWay Segment 8 Project, which are the following:

- The design and construction of an at-grade crossing (or crossings) of Whitsett Avenue and all associated elements, in order to best connect Segment 8 of the LARiverWay to the existing LARiverWay and Zev Yaroslavsky LA River Greenway west of Whitsett Avenue, along with the existing segment of LA River Studio City Greenway east of Whitsett Avenue. This includes an expanded welcome plaza at the northwest corner of the intersection of Whitsett Avenue / Valleyheart Drive South;

- Other design and construction related to Whitsett Avenue, from Ventura Boulevard to Moorpark Street that help facilitate the crossing and connectivity of the LARiverWay as well as the safety and connectivity of Whitsett Avenue for active transportation and for general traffic safety.

The contribution of funds from the Harvard-Westlake School supporting BOE's work on these additional scope elements of the LARiverWay Segment 8 Project does not grant to the Harvard-Westlake School any engineering, traffic, and/or landscape design approval authority on said project.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council AUTHORIZE the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) to deposit the aforementioned $750,000 in funding from the Harvard-Westlake School into a new account in the Engineering Special Services Fund No. 682, Department No. 50, entitled "LARiverWay Segment 8 – Additional Scope – Connectivity" for the support of BOE's civil and traffic engineering and landscape design, and construction work on the LARiverWay Segment 8 Project related to the additional scope elements mentioned in this motion.

PRESENTED BY: _____
NITHYA RAMAN
Councilmember, 4th District

OCT 16 2020

SECONDED BY: _____

OCT 16 2020

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