
LA RIVER

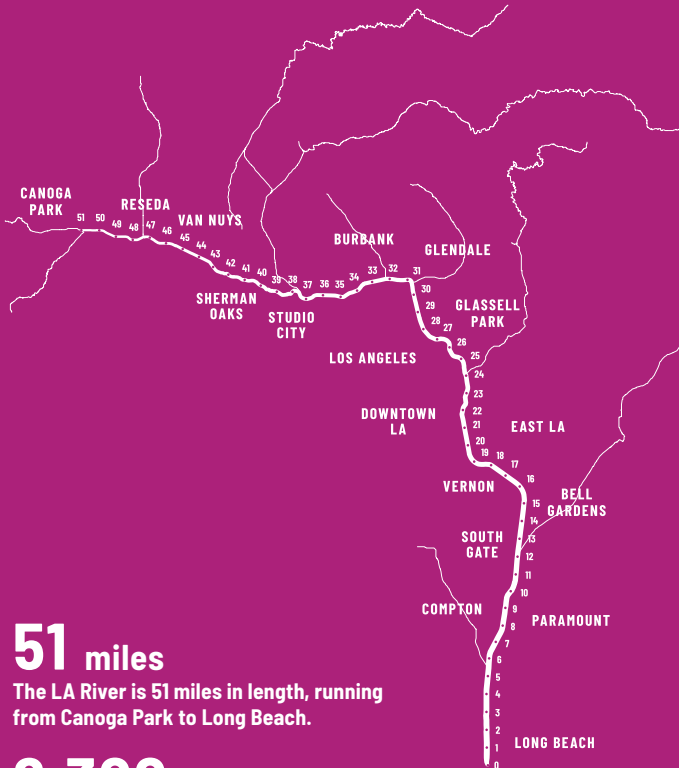
MASTER

PLAN

**ARTS AND
CULTURE**

POCKET SUMMARY





51 miles

The LA River is 51 miles in length, running from Canoga Park to Long Beach.

2,300 acres

There are 2,300 acres of primarily publicly-owned land within the right-of-way, including the river channel.

1,000,000 people

There are nearly one million people who live within one mile of the LA River.

VISION

The Reimagined River

The iconic LA River flows through a 51-mile connected public open space that is seamlessly woven together with neighboring communities. It is an integral part of daily life in LA County—a place to enjoy the outdoors and to get across town, a place to appreciate the serene and to bring all people together, a place to celebrate a thriving urban habitat and understand infrastructure, a place to learn from the past and to shape the future.

For millennia, the LA River sustained Indigenous Peoples. The LA River corridor hosts ceremonial practices and supports the functional arts, for example Indigenous Peoples use of native seeds for musical instruments, plants for health, and materials for baskets.



An elderly Gabrielino (Tongva) woman works dough on a stone metate (1840). Source: Southwest Museum.



The LA River is a place for food culture and local vendors. Source: LA County Public Works, 2018.



Local Artists, such as Leo Limon, utilize the LA River to showcase their artwork. Source: Leo Limon, 2010.



Le Ballet Dembaya, a West African percussion collective, uses the LA River Channel to perform. Source: Shabaka Johnson, Le Ballet Dembaya.

For the last half century, this major public space captured the imagination of Angelenos as the backdrop for dozens of feature films and countless videos, photo shoots, paintings, novels, poetry, musical scores, and more. The river's banks have served as a projection screen and canvas and as a stage for spoken word, music, dance, and other collaborative practice performances.

Among the hundreds of community and arts groups that are present along the river, there are over three dozen organizations and initiatives that focus on the river itself. One example, in Southeastern LA, is the SELA Arts Festival that showcases the local arts community in the channel of the river and invites thousands of community members to participate in the arts through painting workshops, applauding local performers, and supporting local craftspeople and artisans at their market stalls.



The second annual SELA Arts Festival, located at river mile 10.7, used the LA River as a stage and backdrop for music, food, activities, and exhibits. Source: LA County Public Works, 2019.

Public Engagement Feedback

THE MASTER PLAN ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK INCLUDED **EXTENDING MURALS TO THE CHANNEL, LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCES OF ALL STYLES, HIGHLIGHTING LOCAL FOOD VENDORS, AND HOSTING CULTURAL EVENTS IN THE RIVER CHANNEL.**

PARTICIPANTS IN THE MASTER PLAN ENGAGEMENT PROCESS RANKED **ACCESS TO ARTS, CULTURE, EDUCATION, AND RECREATION AMONG THEIR TOP FIVE ISSUES RELATED TO THE LA RIVER.**

Goals About Arts and Culture

Embrace and enhance opportunities for local arts and culture.

Foster opportunities for continued community engagement, development, and education.

Additional Goals

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Reduce flood risk and improve resiliency.

Provide equitable, inclusive, and safe parks, open space, and trails.

Support healthy, connected ecosystems.

Enhance opportunities for equitable access to the river corridor.

Address potential adverse impacts to housing affordability and people experiencing homelessness.

Improve local water supply reliability.

Promote healthy, safe, clean water.

RIVER ATIVE COMMUNITY DISCUSSION



GOAL

Embrace and enhance opportunities for local arts and culture.

The LA River has long been at the cultural and historical heart of Los Angeles. From its first Indigenous Peoples to the many neighborhoods it runs through, engages, and enhances today, the river has always been a valued community resource. **LA County has the opportunity to advance culture, arts, creativity, and community pride throughout the county and to inspire by recognizing, fostering, and preserving the rich tangible and lived cultural heritage along the LA River corridor.** The river presents an opportunity to recognize and incubate new ideas and talent among the next generation of cultural practitioners, offering new cultural opportunities, experiences, and spaces where the arts can flourish and be shared. Interventions that are permanent or temporary, or reflect socially based practices of art, design, and gathering are all waiting to be realized.

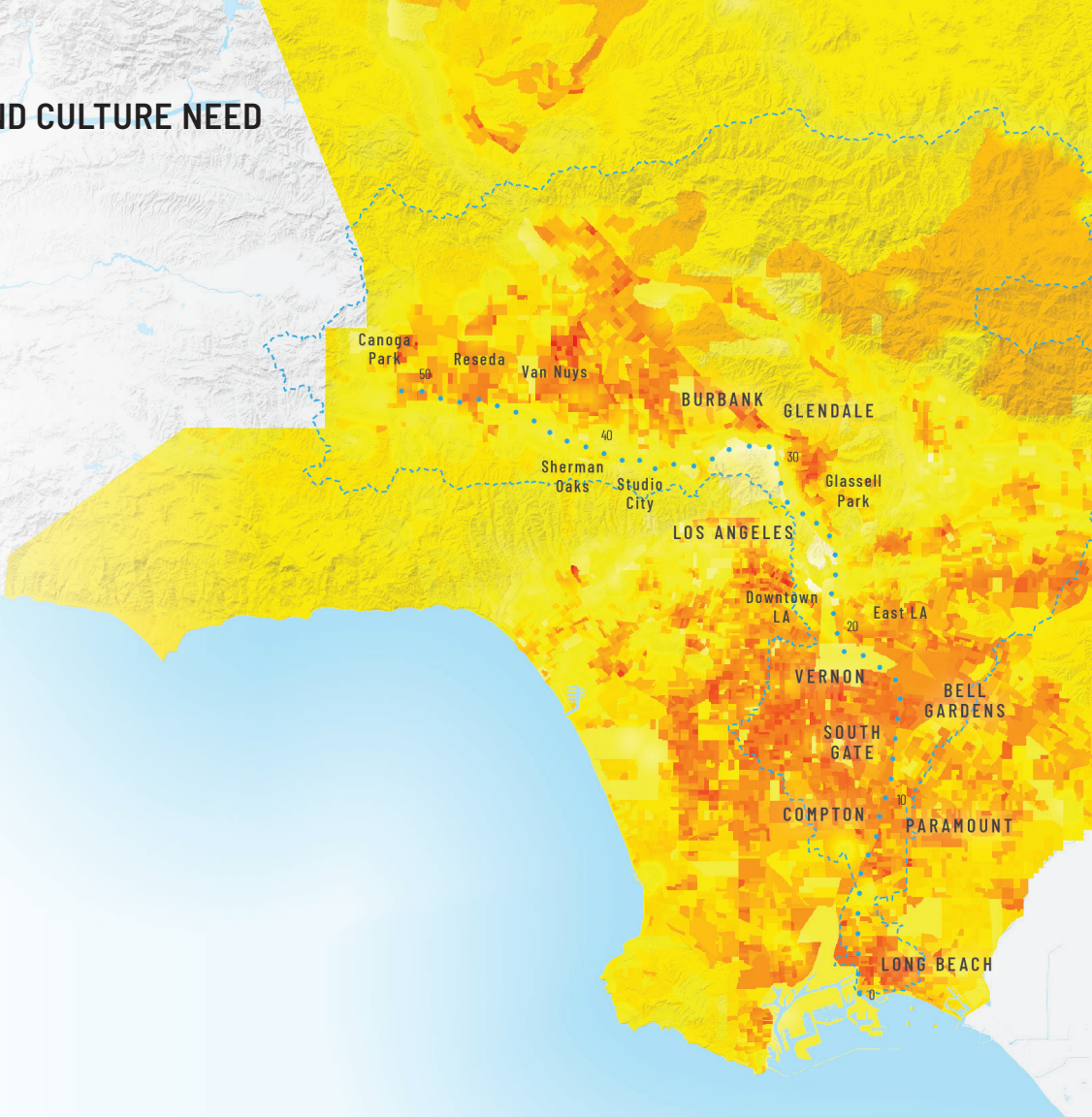
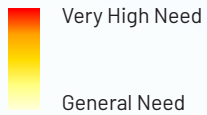
The river should reflect the diversity of its neighboring cultures, communities, and organizations. Source: LA County Public Works, 2019.

LA COUNTY ARTS AND CULTURE NEED

Need Criteria:

- Arts & Culture Asset Density
- Population Density
- Household Income

Need Analysis:





Arts and Culture Need

Communities should have arts and cultural facilities proportional to their population size.

Local artists and vendors display crafts at SELA Arts Festival.
Source: OLIN, 2019.



GOAL

Foster opportunities for continued community engagement, development, and education.

Among the hundreds of community groups that are present along the river, there are over three dozen organizations and initiatives that focus on the river itself, some of which have been active for over three decades. Healthier, more socially connected communities were the third most important river-related issue for community members. The LA River's connection to the region's history, ecology, and culture makes it a prime venue and tool for both community engagement and education. **Community members felt it was most important for people to learn how the river benefits and supports the environment (38%); ecology, habitat, and vegetation (33%); and current hydrology and uses of the river (21%).** Though some adjacent communities currently take advantage of the river, a reimagined river with increased activity could serve as a platform and front door for all surrounding communities.

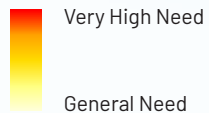
Engaging all members of the community leads to broader stewardship of the LA River and can support growth in communities adjacent to the river. Source: LA County Public Works, 2019.

LA COUNTY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION NEED

Need Criteria:

Engagement & Education Asset Density
Population Density

Need Analysis:





The Youth Summit included workshops organized by leadership from Indigenous Communities along the L.A. River. Source: OLIN, 2018.

Engagement and Education Need

Neighborhoods should have educational opportunities proportional to their population size.

River Pavilions and Common Elements

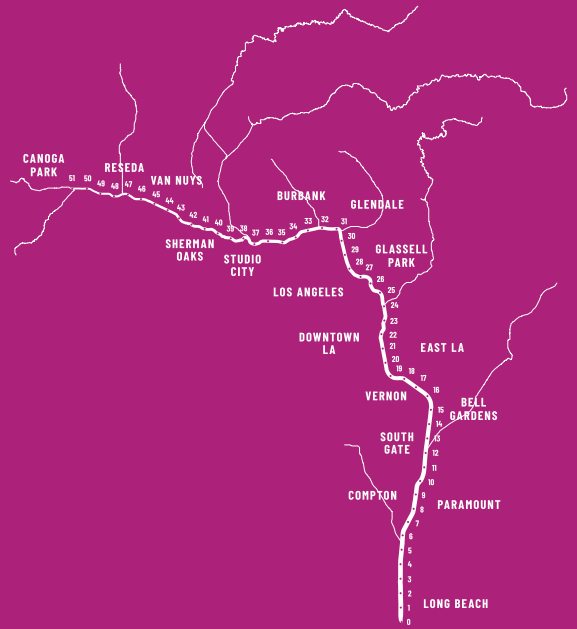
Opportunities for Art along the LA River



This Pavilion design example captures and treats local stormwater flow while also providing access, amenities, and art opportunities to the adjacent community. Source: LA River Master Plan, 2020.

Facilities and amenities along the LA River promote a sense of place and belonging along the river corridor. They are not only what draw people to the river, but also encourage them to stay for longer periods of time to enjoy the river with comfort and safety. These amenities, ranging from large pavilions to a single bench, are meant to be used by all people, including commuters, recreational users, nearby residents, and persons experiencing homelessness. Though the River Pavilions are a significant community resource and house a cluster of various amenities, a single

drinking fountain along the multiuse river trail is just as vital to the experience of a person along the river. Most importantly, these facilities and amenities should strive for design excellence. Great design of these elements will elevate the experience of users along the river and offer opportunities for artwork. Additionally, they must be maintained, be visible, and occur at a consistent cadence so that people know what to expect along the river corridor. This consistency encourages community members to keep coming back and exploring the LA River.





For more info, visit
www.LARiverMasterPlan.org

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