



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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California Coastal Conservancy Awards \$6 Million to the City of Riverside for Improvements to Martha McLean Anza Narrows Park

Funds will help realize goals of Riverside Gateway Project Master Plan

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Plans to improve Martha McLean Anza Narrows Park received a major boost recently when the California Coastal Conservancy awarded as much as \$6 million to the City of Riverside.

The funds will cover half the cost of the \$12 million project, which is designed to expand access to the nearby Santa Ana River and the accompanying Santa Ana River Trail. The city's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department will seek additional funding needed before work can begin.

The goal is to transform the park on Jurupa Avenue into a welcoming gateway that reconnects the community to the Santa Ana River as part of the Riverside Gateway Project Master Plan. The 39.5-acre, city-owned park overlooks the river and is adjacent to the trail.

"These funds will greatly assist in our efforts to connect Riversiders with the river that gives our city its name," said Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson, who has championed the effort. "I look forward to the day when all our residents have safe and convenient access to this incredible recreational amenity."

The existing park has few modern amenities and no playground or restroom facilities. Planned improvements include a new playground, nature play area, exercise stations, swings overlooking the river, open meadows, and shade structures. A bandshell will provide affordable venues for arts and cultural events for residents and visitors, and two new restroom facilities will be built.

Interpretive installations and art that will be installed throughout the park will tell a complete and inclusive history of the site, highlighting Indigenous perspectives. Habitat improvements and new landscaping will prevent unauthorized vehicles from accessing the river and improve access for pedestrians. Existing turf will be replaced with native and near-native pollinator plants.

A clearly marked Santa Ana River Trail trailhead will guide trail users, who also will benefit from improved parking, upgraded irrigation, lighting, shade, drinking water fountains, and a decomposed granite path.