



ericGARCETTI

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

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Photographs available.

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GARCETTI DESIGNATES "RED CAR RIVER PARK"

Los Angeles City Councilman Eric Garcetti and Friends of Atwater Village yesterday announced "Red Car River Park" with official installation of signage designating existing green space abutting the river where the historic Pacific Electric Railway once entered Atwater Village.

"The L.A. River and the historic 'Red Car' Pacific Electric Railway converged many years ago in Atwater Village," said Councilman Garcetti. "Today we reclaim the open space where the tracks crossed the river for a pocket park, and in doing so we also reclaim an important piece of L.A.'s history."

"Our community of Atwater Village has lived by the river since the 1920s, but since then we've slowly walled ourselves off from this great open space," said Sandra Caravella, local resident and founding member of Friends of Atwater Village (FAV). "Red Car River Park creates an important gateway to the river," said Caravella.

Netty Carr, fellow resident and founding FAV member, said "We hope it will be the first of many safe and attractive access points that bring more Atwater and Los Angeles neighbors out to rediscover the river." Red Car River Park serves as the only river access point from the neighborhood south of Glendale Boulevard. The current site features a broad lawn that slopes up the the river bank, as well as a seating area facing large pylons that once supported a Pacific Electric Railway bridge across the river.

"The Red Car crossed over the river from Silver Lake and into Atwater Village on its way to Glendale and then back to downtown," said Ann Lawson of FAV, who remembers riding the Red Car through the neighborhood. "The Red Car was about taking people to places where they wanted to go. We will soon paint a beautiful mural on one of the pylons commemorating the Red Car. Hopefully, its memory will bring out neighbors to someplace they may never have visited: the L.A. River."

In September of last year, Friends of Atwater Village (FAV) hosted a fundraiser as its first effort to support Red Car River Park. FAV has been working with Garcetti's City Council District 13 and Clean & Green to remove the overgrown ivy and we will replant with native plants.

Through the Los Angeles City Neighborhood Matching Fund Program, FAV will create the mural and hopes to recruit Atwater Village children of all ages to take part in this project. FAV's

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overall goal is to increase safety and access for residents seeking recreation and a connection to the river. The effort builds on a small pocket park installed by Northeast Trees on the Southeast side of the Hyperion Bridge at the LA River.

Atwater is fortunate to have the soft-bottom section of the LA River, one of the most beautiful stretches of the river, as one of the community's borders. This portion of the river supports a wide variety of plants and bird-life, including one of the region's largest native birds, the blue heron.

Project sponsors plan to reclaim more of the existing space with installation of walkways and planting more native plants. "We hope to make the site safer and more accessible for local residents seeking recreation and re-connection to the river," said Cesar Portillo of FAV. "Existing hardscape includes a bike rack, river-rock seating areas, which will be cleaned of graffiti. The end result will be a more visually inviting and accessible park."

Photographs available.

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