

Pacoima Wash Activations and Small Projects

In 2020, Pacoima Beautiful secured funds from Prop 68 to continue carrying out the Pacoima Wash Vision Plan (2009) and partnered with KDI to organize various community events and physical enhancements around the intersection of the Pacoima Wash and Haddon Avenue. Since then, we have conducted extensive community engagement, including door-to-door surveying, focus groups, event tabling, and design meetings to ensure the planned improvements reflect the needs of the surrounding community. So far, 75% of the design is complete to date. We hope to sustain the momentum of awareness for the long-term development of the Pacoima Wash Greenway in this area as well as transform what was once a neglected area into a welcoming and safe entry point for the future Greenway. The goal is to create immediate benefits for the community, especially for the youth who use the Haddon Avenue pedestrian bridge to walk to and from school.

The Pacoima Wash is a 33-mile-long tributary of the LA River that runs through several neighborhoods in California's San Fernando Valley. While the waterway serves the important purpose of flood control, it also contributes to a sense of disconnection among locals, making everyday activities like cycling and walking a challenge. In 2009, Pacoima Beautiful gathered local residents to create The Pacoima Wash Vision Plan. This comprehensive plan aimed to transform 4 miles of the Wash in Pacoima, Sylmar, and San Fernando into a community asset that promotes healthy and sustainable living.

Thus far we have hosted an Earth Day Clean-up of the Pacoima Wash with 120 local residents, conducted a presentation and site visit with CSUN Honors Students, hosted various mural design workshops and door-to-door surveying in the spring and early summer months of 2023. We hope to begin painting the mural in October and November.

On this project, we've established vital partnerships that have played a crucial role in our progress. We've actively engaged with the local residents, fostering a strong connection with the community to gather insights and feedback. Additionally, we've benefited from the contributions of dedicated interns who have provided invaluable support in outreach, engagement, surveys, and an observation study of the bridge. Furthermore, our collaboration with CSUN Honors Students has been instrumental in various aspects of the project. To ensure historical accuracy in the mural design, we enlisted the expertise of the Tataviam Land Conservancy, who served as consultants, helping us honor the cultural heritage of the area. These partnerships have enhanced the quality and impact of our work, emphasizing community involvement and historical authenticity.

Community Feedback / Successes:

- We engaged with residents in the surrounding area to gather input on desired amenities and improvements at the site.
- Amenities incorporated into design:
 - Addition of permeable pavers and lights along path of pedestrian bridge
 - Addition of a shade tree
 - Addition of decorative paneling along fence railings, without altering existing railings.
 - Replacing curb cuts with planting beds
 - Introducing low-water landscaping to replace existing vegetation

Challenges:

- Staff Transitions
- Budget Modification Needs
- Parcel Ownership / Mobile Homes
- Lighting and identifying the right type of lighting and who is in charge
- Timeline – we need more time to complete this project because the permits for the small projects can take longer than expected.

We requested an itemized project cost estimate from the contractor to allow for careful selection and prioritization of design elements based on community need and budget allowance. KDI is currently in the process of obtaining permits for all design elements.

Our next steps include:

Community Engagement and Outreach: Continue community engagement efforts to ensure ongoing input and feedback from local residents, Organize additional focus groups and design meetings as needed, and Maintain a strong online and social media presence to keep the community informed and engaged.

Project Development: Complete the remaining 25% of the design work to finalize the plans for the Pacoima Wash Greenway, Work closely with the community to address any design modifications or improvements based on their feedback, Progress towards securing necessary permits for all design elements.

Physical Improvements and Construction: Begin the construction phase, focusing on implementing the approved design elements, and Monitor and manage the progress to ensure that the project stays on schedule and within budget.

Community Events and Activities: Plan and execute community painting days for the mural, Coordinate and obtain the necessary permits for the proposed Movie Night at the Pacoima Wash, and Schedule and organize a Community Clean-Up event to engage the community in the project's progress.