



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 5, 2023

Contact: Chelsea Lucktenberg
cd1comms@lacity.org

Council District 1, LA Department of Transportation and Central City Neighborhood Partners Receive Grant to Study Reconnecting MacArthur Park

LOS ANGELES — Today, **Councilmember Eunisses Hernandez**, the **Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT)** and **Central City Neighborhood Partners (CCNP)** announced an award of \$500,000 from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) to fund the first phase of a new project that aims to reconnect MacArthur Park.

The Civic Engagement, Equity & Environmental Justice grant is part of SCAG’s Sustainable Communities Program. It will fund a traffic analysis to study the permanent closure of Wilshire Boulevard between Parkview Street and Alvarado Street, which will be overseen by LADOT, as well as a robust community outreach and engagement program led by CCNP and Councilmember Hernandez’s office to include community members in the planning process.

“Reconnecting MacArthur Park will bring L.A.’s first major pedestrianized street to one of our most densely populated neighborhoods,” said **Councilmember Hernandez**. “This community-led project will restore the park to its original state before it was cut in two during the 1930’s and will be a major step forward in addressing the historic inequities that impact the surrounding area. I am excited to begin this project and I look forward to working with Central City Neighborhood Partners, the Department of Transportation, and our Westlake and Pico Union residents to bring this to life.”

“For over a decade, Central City Neighborhood Partners has engaged tens of thousands of community members around transportation and traffic safety projects and it is with great excitement that we continue that legacy through the Reconnecting MacArthur Park Project,” said **CCNP Executive Director Margarita Alvarez Gomez**. “This project is about so much more than transportation. This investment in the Westlake and Pico-Union communities says, ‘you matter, you are seen, and you are valued’ – it’s truly about equity. CCNP is honored to work alongside Councilmember Hernandez and the Department of Transportation and be a part of this next step towards a more equitable and environmentally just City.”

"This grant will help us identify community-driven solutions to improve safety and connectivity in MacArthur Park, a key City transportation hub and community destination," said **LADOT General Manager Laura Rubio-Cornejo**. "I want to thank Councilmember Hernandez for setting an expansive vision that recognizes City streets as public space that can enrich our lives."

Closing this section of Wilshire Boulevard will reconnect MacArthur Park – which is currently bisected by the stretch of road – and lay the groundwork for a “One-Park” plan that converts 1.7 acres of heavily trafficked roadway into a high-quality park space that supports bicycle, pedestrian and transit infrastructure in one of LA’s most densely populated neighborhoods.

The Westlake and Pico Union neighborhoods that surround MacArthur Park represent some of the most historically disadvantaged in the City of Los Angeles. Over one third of households are considered overcrowded, a figure that is 11 times higher than the national rate, and the area is park-poor and contains only .5 acres of open space per 1,000 residents, compared to the City average of 8.9 acres per 1,000 residents. This new community-building initiative will restore a stretch of land that is currently a hotspot on the City’s high-injury network and advances the City’s goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality in one of the most urbanized areas in Los Angeles.

The first phase of the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2025. Councilmember Hernandez’s office plans to temporarily close the section of Wilshire Boulevard and activate community programming over weekend days throughout 2024 and 2025 as LADOT completes the traffic analysis.