

An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, a residential area with many houses and palm trees is visible. Behind it, a large, green golf course with a blue lake is situated. The background features rugged, brown mountains under a clear sky. The image is partially covered by an orange overlay on the left side, which contains the text '01' and 'INTRODUCTION'.

01

INTRODUCTION

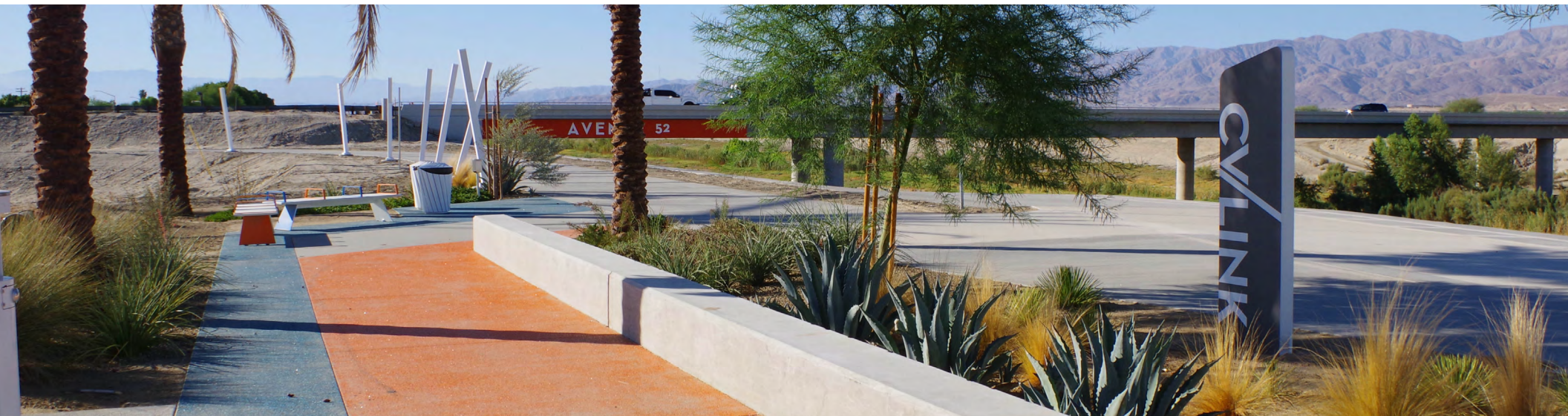
PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Coachella Valley Community Connectors Plan is a regional master plan that identifies and advances a network of low-stress active transportation corridors throughout the Coachella Valley. Community Connectors are envisioned to support both local and regional active transportation trips by better linking population and employment centers, key destinations, and other points of interest. The network of Community Connectors is also intended to connect with CV Link at strategic junctions, providing access to the regional corridor and facilitating longer-distance, intercity trips.

The Community Connectors Plan was developed with funding from a Regional Early Action Planning (REAP 2.0) grant from the State of California. The REAP program supports planning efforts that reduce barriers to opportunity through achieving goals like accelerating infill development, affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH, per Assembly Bill 686), and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita. The Community Connectors Plan advances these goals by improving regional connectivity to CV Link and strengthening active transportation connections to and within areas with this potential.

CV Link is CVAG's flagship regional active transportation corridor. Like a highway, CV Link is mostly separated from the regular street system with access points distributed across key locations within the Coachella Valley. The dispersed access points and grade separations along the CV Link provide bicyclists and neighborhood electric vehicle (NEV) users with a seamless travel environment for longer-distance trips.

The term 'active transportation' includes trips made by bicycling, walking, and other non-motorized devices (scooters, skateboards, etc.)



The CV Link Conceptual Master Plan (2016) first recognized the need for on-street “connectors” and identified potential alignments to better integrate neighborhoods to this regional active transportation facility.

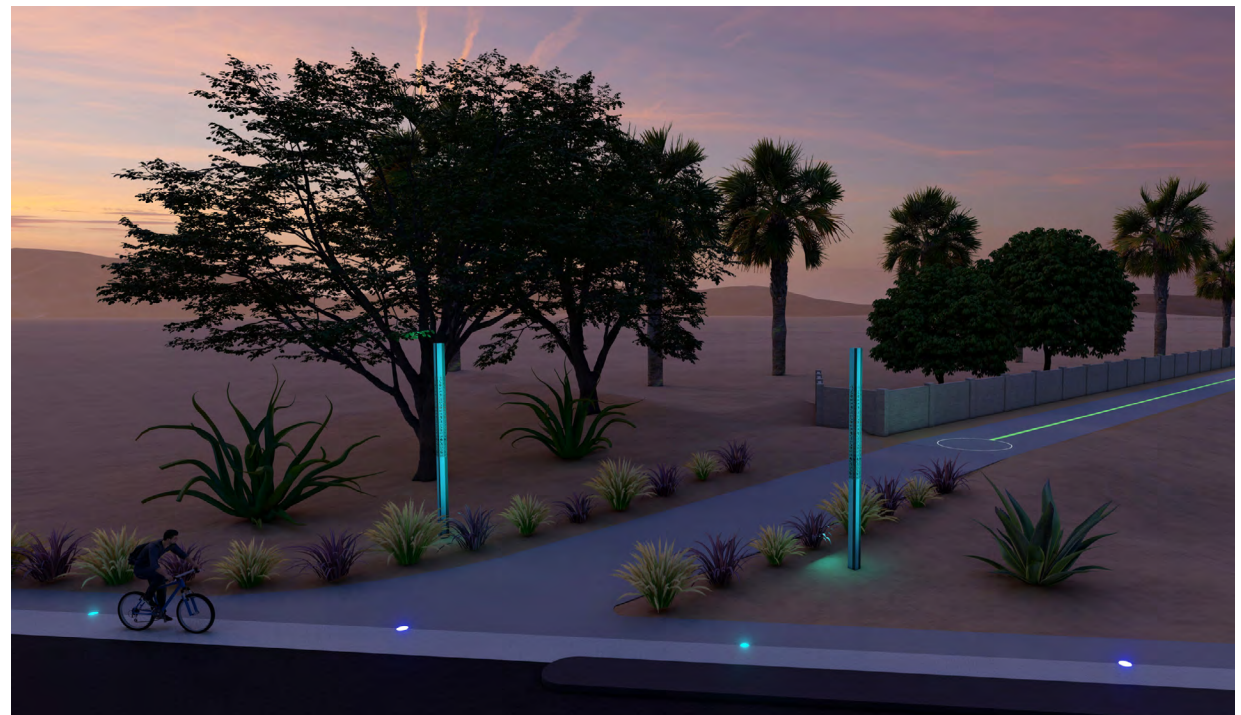
The Arts & Music Line, a nine-mile bikeway currently under construction in Indio, Coachella, and La Quinta, represents an early example of a Community Connector and demonstrates the type of high-quality facilities, amenities, and branding envisioned for the broader network. The project connects multiple schools, retail centers and employment areas to CV Link via Avenue 48 and other intersecting streets. Its bikeway facilities provide greater separation from vehicular traffic, creating a safer, lower-stress environment for bicyclists. Distinct branding, public art installations, and other design elements that reflect the character of the local community further enhance the corridor and provide a model for future Community Connectors.



Cover page of the 2016 CV Link Conceptual Master Plan Vol.1

Expanding on this concept, the Community Connectors Plan is a comprehensive effort to establish a blueprint for a complete regional network of low-stress active transportation connections. The Plan builds on previous and ongoing active transportation planning efforts and was developed through collaboration among local jurisdictions, Tribal nations, community members, and other stakeholders. It also included an updated assessment of the existing conditions, connectivity gaps, and opportunities across the region.

The resulting Plan identifies a network of about 250 miles of Community Connectors that interface with and extend from the CV Link into surrounding communities and recommends feasible facility types designed to support comfortable, low-stress active transportation. The planned network was organized into 44 Community Connector projects from which 15 Early Action Projects were identified based on criteria reflecting regional active transportation goals and REAP 2.0 program objectives. Each project received conceptual design and planning-level construction cost estimates for all unbuilt corridor segments. Recommendations from this Plan are also incorporated into CVAG’s Active Transportation Plan and Transportation Project Prioritization Study, helping integrate the Community Connectors network into the region’s broader transportation planning and investment framework.



Conceptual rendering of Arts & Music Line

The following chapters of the Community Connectors Plan present the analysis and information which influenced the development of the network and describe the process and recommendations for advancing the Community Connectors toward implementation.

Chapter 2

Existing Conditions provides an overview of the existing conditions in the region as they relate to active transportation, covering transportation characteristics, population and employment patterns, and key destinations. The chapter also summarizes key findings from assessments of these topics that informed the development of the Community Connectors network.

Chapter 3

Public Outreach and Stakeholder Collaboration describes the public and stakeholder engagement process which took place during the development of the Community Connectors Plan. It documents the engagement methods and events used to gather community input, summarizes key themes from the feedback received, and explains how stakeholders participated in the planning process. The chapter also details how local jurisdictions were engaged through all stages of the Plan development and helped shape the Community Connectors network.

Chapter 4

Goal, Objectives, and Network Development Framework presents the Community Connectors Plan goal and objectives, and outlines the guiding principles used to develop and evaluate the Connectors network.

Chapter 5

Conceptual Planning introduces the proposed Community Connectors network and the facility classifications that comprise it. It describes how the network was organized into 44 Connector projects and discusses key planning considerations such as where alignment alternatives were evaluated based on criteria including population and employment, improved accessibility to destinations, safety, and facility types which could be implemented.

Chapter 6

Early Action Project Identification describes the scoring criteria used to identify 15 Early Action Projects among the 44 Community Connector projects and the results of that assessment.

Chapter 7

Early Action Projects provides additional planning and conceptual design details for the 15 Early Action Project Community Connectors. Each project is presented through a series of project-specific exhibits that include project area maps, planning-level cost estimates, typical cross-sections and conceptual plan view graphics at four locations per project to illustrate recommended improvements and support future implementation.

Chapter 8

Remaining Community Connector Projects provides additional planning and conceptual design details for projects not among the Early Action Projects. Each project is presented with the same content as provided in Chapter 7, though with typical cross-sections and conceptual plan view graphic locations at only two locations per project.