

2.0 SUMMARY

This chapter of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) contains an overview of the proposed project, its potential environmental effects and mitigation measures, and a summary of the alternatives to the proposed project evaluated in this Draft EIR.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of an EIR, as defined in Section 15121(a) of the State Guidelines for the implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 14, Division 6, is to inform the general public, the local community, and responsible and interested public agencies of the nature of the proposed projects, their possible environmental effects, possible measures to mitigate those effects, and alternatives to the proposed projects. This document assesses the potential significant environmental impacts, including significant unavoidable impacts and cumulative impacts, related to the proposed project. Where there is potential for a significant adverse effect, this report identifies mitigation measures that would either eliminate the impact or reduce the effect to the maximum extent feasible.

This Draft EIR was prepared by the City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning (DCP). The DCP is the Lead Agency for the proposed project. The intended use of this Draft EIR is to assist the City in making decisions regarding the approval of the proposed project.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this Draft EIR was issued on April 4, 2013 for a 30-review period. A total of 33 comment letters were received. Information, data and observations resulting from these letters are included throughout this Draft EIR where relevant. Refer to Appendix A for copies of the NOP and NOP comment letters. Two public scoping meetings were held on April 16 and 22, 2013. The purpose of these meetings was to provide early consultation for the public to express their concerns about the proposed projects, and acquire information and make recommendations on issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR.

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Sections 15087 and 15105, this Draft EIR is being circulated for a 90-day public review period. Responsible and trustee agencies and the public are invited to comment in writing on the information contained in this document. Persons and agencies commenting are encouraged to provide information that they believe is missing from the Draft EIR and to identify where the information can be obtained. All comment letters received concerning the Draft EIR will be responded to in writing, and the comment letters, together with the responses to those comments will be included in the Final EIR.

Comment letters should be sent to:

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2.2 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The *Mobility Plan 2035* (MP 2035 or proposed project) would replace the current Transportation Element (1999) and would provide a transportation blueprint for the City of Los Angeles through the foreseeable future (at least 2035). The MP 2035 reflects current State and regional policies and programs aimed at balancing land use and transportation planning and reducing vehicle miles travelled and associated

greenhouse gas emissions. The MP 2035 identifies a full range of options to meet mobility needs, including bicycling, carpooling, driving, transit, and walking. MP 2035 would lay the policy foundation for safe, accessible and enjoyable streets for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and vehicles alike.

MP 2035 is being prepared in compliance with the 2008 Complete Streets Act (Assembly Bill 1358), which mandates that the circulation element of the General Plan be modified to plan for a balanced, multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all users of streets, roads, and highways, defined to include motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, children, persons with disabilities, seniors, movers of commercial goods, and users of public transportation, in a manner that is suitable to the rural, suburban, or urban context of the general plan. Compliance with the Complete Streets Act is expected to result in increased options for mobility; fewer greenhouse gas emissions; more walkable communities; and fewer travel barriers for active transportation and those who cannot drive such as children or people with disabilities. Complete streets play an important role for those who would choose not to drive if they had an alternative as well as for those who do not have the option of driving. The Complete Streets Act specifically encourages an increase in non-driving modes of travel. The project is also consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy. The MP 2035 includes:

- **Policies** – that support the goals and objectives described above.
- An **Enhanced Complete Street System** – that prioritizes selected roadways for pedestrian, bicycle, transit, or vehicle enhancements. The enhanced complete street system is comprised of a package of concept-level improvements that would enhance the pedestrian, bicycle, transit and vehicle network. In general, different routes are emphasized for different modes, resulting in a comprehensive package of roadway improvements designed to enhance each mode of transportation within the City of Los Angeles.
- An **Action Plan** – that prioritizes actions necessary for implementing the policies and programs.
- A **Complete Street Manual** – that describes and identifies implementation procedures for the City’s expanded Street Standards and Guidelines, and the incorporation of the Technical Design Handbook (Bike Plan).

As discussed above, the proposed project is a mix of policies and conceptual-level improvements to the transportation network. Detailed roadway designs for improvements to individual roadways or corridors are not yet available. Therefore, this EIR analyzes impacts at an area-level of detail. For purposes of comparison of impacts between different areas of the City the Area Planning Commission (APC) boundaries were selected as the most appropriate scale to analyze the various issue areas considered in this EIR and to provide an area-level assessment of impacts. As individual projects move forward they will be evaluated at a project level as appropriate.

2.3 SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

Section 15382 of the State CEQA Guidelines defines a significant impact on the environment as “a substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within an area affected by the project, including land, air, water, flora, fauna, ambient noise, and objects of historic or aesthetic significance.” In order to approve a project with unavoidable and significant impacts, the lead agency must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations (in accordance with Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines) indicating that the benefits of approving the proposed project outweigh the negative environmental consequences. Based on the analysis contained in this EIR, the proposed project would create significant and unavoidable impacts related to 1) noise from increased bus frequency along certain transit routes, 2) transportation – increased congestion along certain routes, and 3) biological resources – potentially significant impacts related to special-status species, protected habitat, and wetlands in areas requiring acquisition outside the street right-of-ways due to unknown project-specific details.

2.4 LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT OR NO IMPACT

Based on the analysis contained in this Draft EIR, the following issue areas were found to be less-than-significant impact or no impact:

- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gases
- Land Use

In addition, transportation impacts related to the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit system, emergency access, parking, and safety would be less-than-significant with mitigation.

Chapter 6.0 Other CEQA Considerations found the following issues to be less than significant: Aesthetics, Agricultural and Forestry Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities and Services Systems.

2.5 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

CEQA requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project that could feasibly avoid or lessen significant environmental impacts while substantially attaining the basic objectives of the project.¹ An EIR should also evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. The range of feasible alternatives is selected and discussed in a manner intended to foster meaningful public participation and informed decision making. Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6[f][1]) are environmental impacts, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries, and whether the proponent could reasonably acquire, control, or otherwise have access to the alternative site. Alternatives considered for the proposed project were limited (as for the proposed project) to the envelop of the existing public right-of-ways, as alternatives that extend into private property would be infeasible or require substantial displacements that would result in significant and unavoidable impacts. **Table 2-1** provides a summary comparison of the alternatives with the proposed project.

The alternatives considered for the proposed project include:

Alternative 1 – No Project Alternative

The No Project Alternative is required by Section 15126.6(e)(2) of the CEQA Guidelines and assumes that the proposed project would not be implemented. The No Project Alternative allows decision-makers to compare the impacts of approving the proposed project with the impacts of not approving the proposed projects. The No Project Alternative includes “what would be reasonably expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved, based on current plans and consistent with available infrastructure and community services” (CEQA Section 15126.6[e][2]).

Alternative 2 – Moderate Package of Enhancements

Alternative 2 includes the same land use assumptions as the project and the No Project Alternative. In order to analyze impacts of this alternative, the network assumptions for Future No Project were modified to incorporate facilities associated with a moderate package of enhancements. These assumptions were less comprehensive than those assumed for the proposed project alternative to offer a lower cost alternative with potentially fewer impacts due to fewer and/or less extensive changes.

¹CEQA Guidelines, CCR, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15126.6.

TABLE 2-1: SUMMARY OF IMPACTS -- PROJECT AND ALTERNATIVES			
Environmental Issue	Project -- Comprehensive Package of Improvements	Alternative 1 No Project Alternative	Alternative 2 Moderate Package of Enhancements
TRANSPORTATION, PARKING, AND SAFETY			
Circulation System (Roadway)	Significant	Significant (more vehicle miles traveled than project; fewer street segment LOS impacts than project)	Significant (more vehicle miles traveled than project; fewer street segment LOS impacts than project)
Mitigation Measures:			
T1	Construction activities will be managed through the implementation of a traffic control plan to mitigate the impact of traffic disruption and to ensure the safety of all users of the affected roadway. The plan will address construction duration and activities and include measures such as operating a temporary traffic signal or using flagmen adjacent to construction activities, as appropriate.		
T2	LADOT will adjust traffic signal timing after the implementation of the proposed project (both along project routes and parallel roadways if traffic diversions have occurred as a result of the proposed project). This adjustment would be necessary, especially at the intersections where roadway striping would be modified. Signal timing adjustment could reduce traffic impacts at impacted intersections. (LADOT routinely makes traffic signal timing changes and signal optimization on an as-needed basis to accommodate the changes in traffic volumes to reduce congestion and delay in the City.)		
T3	The City shall implement appropriate Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures in the City of Los Angeles including potential trip-reducing measures such as bike share strategies, bike parking, expansion of car share programs near high density areas, bus stop improvements (e.g. shelters and "next bus" technologies), crosswalk improvements, pedestrian wayfinding signage, etc. (Such improvements shall also be required of private projects as part of the review and approval process.)		
T4	In areas where implementation of the proposed project could potentially result in diversion of traffic to adjacent residential streets, LADOT shall monitor traffic on identified residential streets, upon request submitted through the council Office, to determine if traffic diversion occurs. If traffic on residential streets is found to be significantly impacted, in accordance with LADOT's Traffic Study Policies and procedures, LADOT will work with neighborhood residents to identify and implement appropriate traffic calming measures.		
T5	In areas where the implementation of the proposed project could potentially affect transportation systems managed by other agencies, such as Caltrans or Metro, or neighboring jurisdictions, the City of Los Angeles shall coordinate with these entities to identify transportation improvements in accordance with the goals and policies of MP 2035 and seek opportunities to jointly pursue funding. Mobility solutions shall be focused on safety, enhancing mobility options, improving access to active modes, and implementing TDM measures to achieve both local and regional transportation and sustainability goals.		
Congestion Management Program	Significant	Significant (same freeway segment impact as project)	Significant (same freeway segment impact as project)
Mitigation Measures: See measures for Circulation System above.			
Emergency Access	No Impact	No Impact (similar to project)	No Impact (similar to project)
Public Transit, Bicycle, or Pedestrian Facilities	No Impact	No Impact (less mobility than the project and Alternative 2)	No Impact (less mobility than project)
Parking	Less than Significant	No Impact (no parking loss)	Less than Significant (parking loss similar to project)
Safety	No Impact	No Impact (less pedestrian, bicycle safety than project)	No Impact (similar to project)
LAND USE & PLANNING			
Consistency with Applicable Plans and Policies	Less than Significant	Significant	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Land Use Compatibility	Less than Significant	No Impact	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Mitigation Measures:			
LU1	The City shall facilitate identification of parking strategies (shared parking districts) in locations where parking supply for commercial uses consists only of on-street parking that would be removed by the proposed project. The City shall implement feasible options to address any parking shortages.		
AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES			
Regional	Less than Significant	Less than Significant (more emissions than project and Alternative 2)	Less than Significant (more emissions than project)
Localized	Less than Significant	Less than Significant (similar to project)	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Toxic Air Contaminants	Less than Significant	No Impact	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Odors	Less than Significant	No Impact	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Less than Significant	Less than Significant (more emissions than project and Alternative 2)	Less than Significant (more emissions than project)

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NOISE & VIBRATION			
Noise	Significant	Less than Significant (less than project)	Significant (less bus frequency than project)
Mitigation Measures:			
N1 A project-specific noise analysis shall be completed, and impacts shall be mitigated, if the City determines that construction equipment would be located within 500 feet of a sensitive land use.			
Groundborne Vibration	Less than Significant	No Impact (less than project)	Less than Significant (similar to project)
Mitigation Measures:			
N2 A project-specific vibration analysis shall be completed if the City determines that construction equipment would be located within 15 feet of non-engineered timber and masonry buildings (typical of residential buildings and institutional buildings. Potential vibration impacts shall be mitigated to the greatest extent feasible.			
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Special-status species, protected habitat, and wetlands	Significant	Less than Significant (less than project)	Significant Impact (similar to project)
Mitigation Measures:			
BR1	Special-Status Species and Habitat. For future enhancements occurring within 200 feet of a Significant Ecological Area designated by the County of Los Angeles or within 200 feet of areas containing native vegetation, such as open space and undeveloped areas, a project-specific biological resource survey and assessment shall be conducted and prepared that discloses and mitigates, to the extent feasible, the impacts of the mobility improvements and identifies all required permits. Prior to implementation of mobility improvements, all required permits must be obtained.		
BR2	Wetland Habitat. For mobility improvements along the TEN that extend into wetlands, all applicable wetland permits shall be acquired. These permits include, but would not be limited to, a Section 404 Wetlands Fill Permit from the USACE, or a Report of Waste Discharge from the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), and a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the RWCQB. Additionally, a Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) would be required for development that would cross or affect any stream course. Where feasible, the maximum amount of existing wetlands shall be preserved and minimum 25- to 50-foot buffers around all sides of these features shall be established. In addition, the final project design shall not cause significant changes to the pre-project hydrology, water quality, or water quantity in the wetland that is to be retained. This shall be accomplished by avoiding or repairing any disturbance to the hydrologic conditions supporting these wetlands, as verified through wetland protection plans. Where avoidance of the Ballona Wetlands is not feasible, then mitigation measures shall be implemented for the project-related loss of any existing wetlands on site, such that there is no net loss of wetland acreage or habitat value. Wetland mitigation shall be developed as a part of the Section 404 CWA permitting process, or for nonjurisdictional wetlands, during permitting through the RWQCB and/or CDFG. Mitigation is to be provided prior to construction related impacts on the existing wetlands. The exact mitigation ratio is variable, based on the type and value of the wetlands affected by the project, but agency standards typically require a minimum of 1:1 for preservation and 1:1 for construction of new wetlands. In addition, a Wetland Mitigation and Monitoring Plan shall be developed that includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions of the wetland types, and their expected functions and values. • Performance standards and monitoring protocol to ensure the success of the mitigation wetlands over a period of five to ten years. • Engineering plans showing the location, size and configuration of wetlands to be created or restored. • An implementation schedule showing that construction of mitigation areas shall commence prior to or concurrently with the initiation of construction. • A description of legal protection measures for the preserved wetlands (i.e., dedication of fee title, conservation easement, and/ or an endowment held by an approved conservation organization, government agency or mitigation bank). 		
BR3	Migratory Birds. To prevent the disturbance of nesting native and/or migratory bird species, the City shall require that clearing of street trees or other vegetation should take place between September 1 and February 14. If construction is scheduled or ongoing during bird nesting season (February 15 to August 31), the City of Los Angeles shall require that a qualified biologist conduct a nesting bird survey within 250 feet of the construction activity, no less than 14 days and no more than 30 days prior to the commencement of construction activities. Surveys shall be conducted in accordance with California Department of Fish and Wildlife protocols, as applicable. If no active nests are identified on or within 240 feet of the construction activity, no further mitigation is necessary. A copy of the pre-construction survey shall be submitted to the Department of City Planning (DCP). If an active nest is identified, construction shall be suspended within 100 feet of the nest until the nesting cycle is complete, as determined by a qualified ornithologist or biologist.		
SOURCE: TAHA, 2013.			