

California Department of Transportation

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February 6, 2026

Mitali Gupta, Project Manager
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza, Mail Stop 99-22-32
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: LA River Path Project – Draft Environmental
Impact Report (DEIR)
SCH # 2019100443
GTS # 07-LA-2019-04984
Vic. LA 5 PM: 20.693
LA 110 PM: 25.523
LA 101 PM: 0.097
LA 10 PM: 17.952

Dear Mitali Gupta:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced environmental document. The Project is a walking and bicycling path along an approximately 8-mile stretch of the LA River between Elysian Valley in Los Angeles and the City of Maywood, through downtown Los Angeles and the City of Vernon. The Project would start at Riverside Drive in Los Angeles, connecting with the LA River Greenway Trail, at the northern end, to Atlantic Boulevard in Maywood, connecting with the existing LA River Trail, which continues to Long Beach. The primary objective of the project is to develop a safe, active transportation corridor along the LA River. This facility, which is physically separated from vehicular traffic, aims to enhance recreational opportunities, support regional and local mobility, and improve quality of life by offering a safe, comfortable, and accessible path for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities.

The Draft EIR evaluates seven alternatives:

- Proposed Project: Would close the entire 8-mile gap (from Riverside Drive to Atlantic Boulevard) The design includes 7 new bridges and 9 new access points (5 on the east bank and 4 on the west bank)
- Option 1: Similar to Proposed Project, this alternative closes the entire 8-mile gap, but includes 6 new bridges and 11 new access points (5 on east bank and 6 on west bank)

- Option 2: Also similar to Proposed Project, this alternative closes the entire 8-mile gap and includes 7 new bridges and 9 new access points (5 on east bank and 4 on west bank)
- Mostly-East Bank: Similar to the Proposed Project, closing the entire 8-mile gap, but prioritizes access mostly on the east bank. The design includes 5 new bridges and 9 new access points, 6 of which are on the east bank.
- Mostly-West Bank: Similar to the Proposed Project, closing the entire 8-mile gap, but prioritizes access mostly on the west bank. The design includes 6 new bridges and 10 new access points, 6 of which are on the west bank.
- Shortened Northern Path: A shortened segment of the Proposed Project, which would close approximately 3.2 miles of the gap between the northern terminus at Riverside Drive and Sixth Street. The design includes 4 new bridges and 5 new access points (3 on east bank and 2 on west bank)
- Shortened Southern Path: A shortened segment of the Proposed Project would close approximately 5 miles of the gap between the southern terminus at Atlantic Boulevard and First Street. The design includes 4 new bridges and 6 new access points (3 on east bank and 3 on west bank).

Each alternative has a number of design variations and includes a combination of path types, river crossings, and access points. Access points are areas where users can enter and exit the LA River Path, connecting them to nearby neighborhoods, job centers, schools, transit, parks, and businesses.

After reviewing the DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans aims to provide a safe, reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. For this reason, Caltrans acknowledges and supports the stated goals of the LA River Path Project. These infrastructure investments will help California meet its climate, transportation, and livability goals. By removing barriers and improving safety, this Project can make transportation mode shift easier for Californians and help reduce the number of trips made by driving, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and encourage active modes of travel.

Caltrans would like to specifically state support for project alternatives that fully close the 8-mile active transportation gap along the LA River. Closing this critical gap in the active transportation network would greatly benefit both transportation and recreational users throughout the entire region. Please also consider the following while finalizing the design of the project:

- While Safety is mentioned, it primarily looked at collisions. While this is a critically important metric, based on previous feedback Caltrans has received, perceived risk, such as enclosed or dimly lit areas, are also impactful dynamics to user comfort. Understanding perceived risks can help determine what types of features might mitigate said risk (CCTV, call boxes, pedestrian scale lighting, gated access, etc.)

- The DEIR notes that bicycle parking and storage facilities are often incorporated at nearby metro mobility hubs. It would be beneficial to know if any bike racks or rest areas are being considered at locations along the actual route.

Caltrans planners and engineers are available to partner on implementing design elements that improve safety and mobility for people walking, riding bikes, or taking transit throughout the project area.

Caltrans District 7 Office of Complete Streets contact information:

Central Responsibility Area - Nick Carmona
Phone: (213) 808-4826 | Email: nick.carmona@dot.ca.gov

Please be aware that Caltrans encroachment permits will be required at all locations where Project work interacts with State ROW. This includes any grading, topography, or equipment work that will change the pattern or direction of water runoff in a way that will impact State facilities or ROW.

A condition of approval for issued entitlements shall include a requirement to work with Caltrans' Office of Permits to obtain the appropriate encroachment permits. Final design requirements for any proposed changes to infrastructure within or along Caltrans Right-of-way will be determined by the Office of Permits. At the time of permit application there will be rounds of review and corrections to ensure all design, Right-of-way, access management, water runoff, environmental, and statutory requirements are being addressed.

Caltrans District 7 Office of Permits contact information:

Mailing Address: 100 S Main Street, Ste 100 Los Angeles, CA 90012
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday
Phone: 213-897-3631 | Fax: 213-897-0420 | E-mail: D7.Permits@dot.ca.gov

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2019-04984.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins

Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse