

# Chapter 1 | Introduction

The County of Los Angeles (County) has prepared this Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (Draft PEIR), which examines the potential impacts on the environment related to the *County of Los Angeles Bicycle Master Plan* (also referred to as the “Bicycle Master Plan,” the “Plan,” or “proposed project”) (Alta Planning + Design 2011; herein incorporated by reference). This Draft PEIR was prepared by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (LACDPW).

## 1.1 Background

The existing *Plan of Bikeways* for the County of Los Angeles was adopted in 1975 and amended in 1976 (Los Angeles County 1976). It is a component of the Transportation Element of the comprehensive *County of Los Angeles General Plan* (General Plan). The *Plan of Bikeways* consists of goals and policies, design standards, criteria for corridor selection, and implementation measures, along with mapping of bikeway corridor routes. It anticipated that each city within the County would adopt detailed feeder systems to supplement the County-wide network.

Currently, the Los Angeles County bikeway system includes approximately 144 miles of existing Class I bike paths, Class II bike lanes, and Class III bike routes. (For a definition of the bikeway types, see Chapter 2.)

## 1.2 Project Summary

The proposed Bicycle Master Plan would replace the 1975 *Plan of Bikeways*. The Plan was prepared by Alta Planning + Design for the LACDPW. The Bicycle Master Plan proposes a vision for a diverse regional bicycle system of interconnected bicycle corridors, support facilities, and programs to make bicycling more practical and desirable to a broader range of people in the County. It is intended to guide the development and maintenance of a comprehensive bicycle network and set of programs throughout the County’s unincorporated communities for the next 20 years.

The Bicycle Master Plan would be a component of the Transportation Element of the General Plan, which is a long-range policy document that guides growth and development in the unincorporated portion of Los Angeles County. When the 2035 Los Angeles County General Plan Update is approved, the Bicycle Master Plan will be incorporated as a component of the Mobility Element.

The Bicycle Master Plan includes recommendations for an expanded bikeway network in unincorporated communities and along rivers, creeks, and flood control facilities throughout the County. It outlines a range of recommendations to facilitate accomplishing the regional goals of increasing the number of people who bike and the frequency of bicycle trips; encouraging the development of Complete Streets (see Chapter 2 for a description of the Complete Streets concept); improving safety for bicyclists; and increasing public awareness and support for bicycle-related programs.

## 1.3 About This EIR

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted in 1970 to disclose to decision makers and the public the significant environmental effects of proposed actions. CEQA applies to all discretionary activities proposed to be carried out or approved by California public agencies. The proposed Bicycle Master Plan is a discretionary activity, so CEQA is applicable. Therefore, the County prepared an Initial Study to determine whether an EIR would be required for the proposed project, and if so, which environmental topics needed to be addressed in the EIR. The Initial Study was distributed with a Notice of Preparation (NOP) on April 4, 2011 (see Section 1.4.1 and Appendix A). Based on the Initial Study, the County determined that the Bicycle Master Plan may have a significant effect on the environment, and an EIR would be required. The County proposed that the EIR would address the following topics:

- Major drainage courses
- Floodways, floodplains, and designated flood hazard zones
- Quality of stormwater runoff
- Air quality plans
- Air quality standards
- Criteria pollutants ambient air quality standards
- Significant Ecological Areas, buffers, and coastal Sensitive Environmental Resource areas
- Blue-line, perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes
- Riparian and other sensitive habitats
- Unique native trees
- Habitat for sensitive species
- Archaeological resources
- Historic sites
- Mineral resources
- Scenic highways
- Views of regional riding or hiking trails
- Generation of greenhouse gas emissions
- Hazardous traffic conditions
- Parking
- Toxic soil or groundwater
- Hazardous materials sites

During the comment period for the NOP and Initial Study, called the scoping period (see Section 1.4.1, below), multiple commenters requested that the Draft PEIR also evaluate potential impacts to existing recreational facilities.

The content and organization of this Draft PEIR are designed to meet the requirements of CEQA. This Draft PEIR is organized as follows:

- **Executive Summary** provides a summary of the project and the environmental impacts and mitigation measures.
- **Chapter 1, Introduction**, provides an overview of the project, CEQA compliance information, and organization of the Draft PEIR.
- **Chapter 2, Project Description**, provides a discussion the goals and objectives of the Bicycle Master Plan and a description of the project.
- **Chapter 3, Environmental Analysis**, presents the environmental analysis of existing conditions, project impacts, and mitigation measures. Based on the topics identified in the Initial Study and during the scoping period, Chapter 3 is organized into the following technical sections:
  - Aesthetics/Visual Resources (Section 3.1)
  - Biological Resources (Section 3.2)
  - Hydrology/Water Quality (Section 3.3)
  - Cultural Resources (Section 3.4)
  - Hazards/Hazardous Materials (Section 3.5)
  - Traffic/Transportation (Section 3.6)
  - Air Quality/Greenhouse Gases (Section 3.7)
  - Mineral Resources (Section 3.8)
- **Chapter 4, Effects Determined Not to be Significant**, presents a short discussion of environmental issues that were found to not have significant impacts resulting from the proposed project.
- **Chapter 5, Alternatives**, includes an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project that would potentially reduce impacts to the environment.
- **Chapter 6, Growth Inducement**, discusses the potential for the proposed project to induce growth.
- **Chapter 7, Significant Irreversible Changes**, addresses the potential for there to be irreversible adverse changes in the environment due to the proposed project.
- **Chapter 8, List of Preparers and Agencies Consulted**, provides a list of the people that participated in the preparation of this document and the agencies contacted during preparation.
- **Chapter 9, References**, provides a comprehensive list of the references cited in this document.

The EIR for the Bicycle Master Plan is a Program EIR. A PEIR can be used to evaluate the impacts of agency plans, policies, or regulatory programs. PEIRs generally analyze broad environmental effects of the program with the acknowledgment that site-specific environmental review may be required for particular portions of the program when those portions are proposed for implementation and more information is available.

In this case, this Draft PEIR addresses the impacts of adopting the Bicycle Master Plan. It also identifies the types of environmental impacts that would result from the implementation of the individual projects in the Plan. Mitigation measures and strategies are provided when potential significant impacts are identified. This Draft PEIR provides guidance for subsequent analysis of the various components of the Plan as individual projects. These project-level environmental evaluations may use the PEIR to provide general information and may supplement it (or tier off of it) to provide site-specific impact analyses. The level of significance of impacts from individual projects and the applicability of mitigation strategies identified in this document will be evaluated at the project-level evaluations. For individual projects where no impacts would occur, no further environmental documentation will be required. For projects that would have less-than-significant impacts (or where impacts would be reduced to less-than-significant levels through mitigation), Initial Studies/Negative Declarations will be prepared (or Mitigated Negative Declarations where mitigation is required.) For projects that would result in significant environmental impacts, for which mitigation to reduce impacts to a less-than-significant is unavailable or infeasible, project-level EIRs will be prepared.

As discussed above, the County has prepared this Draft PEIR and is the lead agency under CEQA. For the most part, bikeways proposed in the Bicycle Master Plan are located within unincorporated portions of the County, or along rivers, creeks, and flood control facilities throughout the County. However, in order to provide connectivity, bikeways are proposed within other jurisdictions and may require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from these cities. These cities are referred to as “responsible agencies” under CEQA because they may also need to take discretionary actions related to Bicycle Master Plan. The responsible agencies can use this Draft PEIR to support their decision-making process. Responsible agencies for this Draft PEIR are shown in Table 1-1.

**Table 1-1. Responsible Agencies**

Agoura Hills	Glendale	Long Beach	Rosemead
Arcadia	Glendora	Los Angeles	San Dimas
Azusa	Hawthorne	Malibu	San Gabriel
Calabasas	Huntington Park	Monrovia	Santa Clarita
Carson	Industry	Montebello	Santa Fe Springs
Commerce	Inglewood	Monterey Park	Temple City
Compton	Irwindale	Palmdale	Torrance
Covina	La Canada Flintridge	Paramount	Vernon
Culver City	La Mirada	Pasadena	West Covina
El Monte	La Puente	Pomona	Whittier
El Segundo	La Verne	Rancho Palos Verdes	
Gardena	Lancaster	Rolling Hills Estates	

## **1.4 Public Review**

### **1.4.1 Scoping Period**

As discussed above, the NOP and Initial Study were distributed for review on April 4, 2011, with a public review period—called the scoping period—continuing until May 3, 2011.

As required by CEQA, the NOP and Initial Study were filed with the State Clearinghouse, starting the scoping period. The NOP was also filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County and was published in 13 general-circulation newspapers in the County. In addition, the NOP, and in some cases the Initial Study, were mailed or sent electronically to agencies and other parties that may have an interest in the Bicycle Master Plan and knowledge that could provide assistance in the preparation of the EIR. Finally, copies of the Initial Study were provided to all County of Los Angeles Public Library locations, and the Initial Study was posted on the LACDPW webpage.

Two scoping meetings were held for the PEIR on April 19, 2011, at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Headquarters at Union Station in Los Angeles (also known as the Gateway Center). This location was selected because of its central location within the County and its accessibility by multiple transportation modes. The scoping meetings were scheduled in the afternoon and early evening. Attendees were provided a brief presentation and asked to provide oral or written comments. Interested parties were also invited to submit comments by mail or email.

The Scoping Report, located in Appendix B, provides additional information about the distribution of the NOP and Initial Study and the comments received.

### **1.4.2 Draft PEIR Comment Period**

The Draft PEIR is now being distributed to the public and interested or affected agencies for review. This begins a 45-day comment period, from [DATE] to [DATE]. During this time, the public and agencies are asked to review the Draft PEIR and provide comments on the document. Interested parties may submit their comments to:

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Attention Ms. Reyna Soriano  
P.O. Box 1460  
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