



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 17-0983, **Version:** 1

---

Recommendation to receive supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing, and adopt a Resolution certifying Environmental Impact Report (EIR 01-17) making findings of fact; adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the Alamitos Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project (State Clearinghouse No. 2017011072); and, authorize City Manager, or designee, to adopt Final Plans and Specifications for the Alamitos Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project. (District 2)

On September 30, 2008, AB 1358, the California Complete Streets Act, was signed into law and required that local governments consider a wider range of users and factors in transportation planning than earlier schemes that focused primarily on vehicle intersection delay. Subsequently, on October 15, 2013, the City Council adopted the Mobility Element of the General Plan, complying with State law by establishing a policy direction to consider the needs of all users, pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and individual motorists, when designing roadway improvements. Most recently, on February 7, 2017, the City Council adopted an update to the City's Bicycle Master Plan, including the provision of protected bike lanes on Alamitos Boulevard. The Alamitos Avenue Complete Streets Improvement Project implements the City Council's policy direction through a reconfiguration of Alamitos Avenue between 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Ocean Boulevard.

The proposed project (Exhibit A) improves pedestrian, cyclist, and motorist safety through the reconfiguration of Alamitos Avenue to a two-lane divided roadway that would match the roadway section north of 7<sup>th</sup> Street. North of 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Alamitos Avenue has been restriped to provide a two-lane, divided roadway, separated by a two-way left turn, with on-street parking and on-street bike lanes, as well as a buffer to separate bicycle traffic from vehicular traffic. Currently, most of the project site provides two-lanes in each direction separated by a two-way left-turn lane; south of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, only one southbound through lane is provided to just past Broadway. Before restriping activities, the project would remove and recycle existing asphalt within the project site and resurface the roadway. The project site is approximately 3,400 feet of road length. This type of improvement is commonly referred to as a "road diet."

The proposed improvements are necessary to facilitate a sufficiently sized and protected bike lane along this section of Alamitos Avenue. Benefits of road diets include fewer collisions, improved perception of safety leading to an increase in cycling and walking, and reduced speeding and vehicle code violations. The road diet is not without costs and the policy question for the City Council is whether 77 seconds of additional vehicle delay during the morning commute is worth the improved safety and comfort of all users of the street. Staff enthusiastically recommends approval of the project as it will provide meaningful safety

improvements and close a gap in the bicycle network connecting central Long Beach to the beach. This project will add 23 parking spaces during the morning peak hours, due to the removal of peak-hour parking restrictions. There will be a loss of five all day parking spaces. The loss of these spaces is necessary to provide adequate sight distance at driveways along the corridor.

Many public works improvements that are consistent with adopted plans and policies do not require City Council approval. Due to specifics of the traffic delay impact of this particular project, City Council approval is required to certify the Environmental Impact Report associated with the project.

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), an Environmental Impact Report (Exhibit B) was prepared. An Initial Study prepared in January 2017 determined that an EIR would be the appropriate level of CEQA environmental review pursuant to Section 15161 of the CEQA Guidelines. Based upon the Initial Study, the only impact area evaluated further in the EIR related to Transportation Impacts. On January 31, 2017, the Notice of Preparation (NOP) and Initial Study were released for public review. Standard responses were received by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) that were factored into the preparation of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was circulated for public review from April 19, 2017 to June 5, 2017. Standard responses were received by OPR, Caltrans, and Los Angeles County Fire Department. A letter of concern or opposition was received by the Long Beach Unified School District. Comments from the School District relate primarily to delay experienced by parents and staff attempting to travel by car to Franklin Classical Middle School (540 Cerritos Avenue) and Stevenson Elementary School (515 Lime Street). Responses to all the comments are contained within the Final EIR.

No mitigation measures are feasible to reduce the impacts to vehicle delay identified in the EIR. The EIR identifies significant impacts to transportation that would remain significant, unavoidable and adverse. These environmental impacts relate to vehicle delay and intersection vehicle congestion. Due to these significant unavoidable adverse impacts, certification of this EIR would require approval of a Statement of Overriding Considerations that determines the project's economic, legal, social, and technological benefits would outweigh the unavoidable adverse impacts that may be considered acceptable. Complete findings related to adoption of the CEQA document are attached (Exhibit A to the Resolution).

City Council's certification of the EIR and adoption of the project's Plans and Specifications is recommended to comply with, and implement, the City's Mobility Element of the General Plan. Specifically, Policy 1-1 calls on the City to "improve the performance and visual appearance of Long Beach's streets, design streets holistically using the "complete streets approach," which considers walking, those with mobility constraints, bicyclists, public transit

users, and various other modes of mobility in parallel.” Policy 1-9 goes on to instruct “increase mode shift of transit, pedestrians, and bicycles.” The proposed project is necessary to close a gap in the City’s bicycle network, to increase safety, and to encourage mode shift to active transportation including cycling and walking.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Michael J. Mais on September 1, 2017 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa José-Murray on August 30, 2017.

City Council action is requested on November 7, 2017, to accommodate a winter construction date for the project.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation. Costs for the Alamitos Complete Streets Improvement Project have not yet been determined. If the recommended action is approved, the Public Works Department will return to the City Council to award a construction contract for this project at a later date. The costs associated with project implementation and local job impact, if any, will be disclosed to the City Council at that time.

Approve recommendation.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH CERTIFYING THAT THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE ALAMITOS AVENUE "COMPLETE STREETS" IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (STATE CLEARING-HOUSE NO. 2017011072) HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, AND STATE AND LOCAL GUIDELINES, AND MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS RELATIVE THERETO; AND ADOPTING A STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

CRAIG A. BECK  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST  
CITY MANAGER