

March 18, 2021

CHAIR AND PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

City of Long Beach

California

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Find that this action is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act; and

Receive and file the 2020 Mobility Element Implementation Report and instruct the Director of Development Services to submit the Implementation Report to the City Council and State Office of Planning and Research. (Citywide)

**APPLICANT:**

City of Long Beach  
Department of Development Services  
411 W. Ocean Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**DISCUSSION**

On October 15, 2013, the City Council adopted the 2013-2035 Mobility Element, one of the seven State-mandated elements of the General Plan. Cities and counties in California are required to prepare and adopt a general plan as a comprehensive guide for long-term development. The General Plan analyzes existing conditions and projects needs into the future, as a basis for determining policies, programs, and objectives. It also establishes the long-term policy framework for day-to-day decision-making based upon these objectives. The Mobility Element of the General Plan focuses on how people and goods get around and through the city.

California law [Government Code §65400] requires cities and counties to provide annual reports on General Plan elements to their respective legislative bodies and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR). Reports are required to provide the status of implementation measures, with specific reporting requirements for the housing element portion of the annual report. The intent of this statute is to ensure that the General Plan directs all land use decisions and remains an effective guide for future development. The purpose of this annual reporting, then, is to provide enough information to allow local legislative bodies to assess how general plans are being implemented in accordance with adopted goals, policies, and implementation measures (General Plan Guidelines,



2017, p. 259)<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, this report has been produced to satisfy this requirement for the Mobility Element and to highlight the implementation achievements since its adoption in 2013 with an emphasis on progress in 2020. The most recent Implementation Report came before the Planning Commission in April 2020.

The Mobility Element establishes a vision, goals, strategies, policies, and implementation measures necessary to achieve a balanced mobility system that services the needs of all users of the public rights-of-way through complete streets strategies and context-sensitive design principles. Streets and sidewalks, known together as the “public right of way”, comprise the vast majority of public space maintained by the City. Therefore, it is critical that mobility planning focus on all users. A central theme of the Mobility Element is support for a balanced, multi-modal transportation network that enhances connectivity and supports existing development patterns. The emphasis on multi-modal, context sensitive street design advances several broad goals including retaining community character; enhancing environmental sustainability by reducing gasoline consumption and greenhouse gas emissions; and improving public health by improving air quality while providing greater opportunities to be physically active through walking and biking.

In addition, the Mobility Element serves as a guide for a wide range of City planning documents and programming activities, such as the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), transportation-related plans, project entitlement applications and regional planning documents. Since the Mobility Element was adopted, the Downtown/Pedestrian TOD Master Plan, the Bicycle Master Plan and the CX3 Pedestrian Plan have all been developed and adopted as technical appendices of the Mobility Element. 2020 was the 7th full year of implementation for the Mobility Element. The plan’s horizon year is 2035, giving a total of 21 years for its implementation. Therefore, given this milestone of being a third of the way through implementation of the plan, it is an appropriate time to evaluate not only progress on individual projects and programs, but to evaluate overall progress toward achieving the vision, purpose, and goals of the Mobility Element, to determine whether implementation is on track.

The City’s mobility planning framework is grounded in the Mobility Element of the General Plan and supported by a myriad of other planning documents, including the Downtown/TOD and CX3 Pedestrian Plans and the Bicycle Master Plan, which together comprise the technical appendices to the Mobility Element, as well as the 2019 updates to the General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Elements, which support and build off the Mobility Element. This cohesive planning framework has continued to develop in 2020. Key accomplishments include the adoption of Safe Streets Long Beach, development of the Uptown Planning Land Use and Neighborhood Strategy (UPLAN) Mobility Enhancement Plan for North Long Beach, and release of the final Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). Given that transportation accounts for nearly half of greenhouse gas emissions in Long Beach, actions to encourage low-carbon and carbon-free forms of transportation such as walking, biking and taking public transit are central to the CAAP.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR\\_C9\\_final.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/OPR_C9_final.pdf)

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A myriad of policies, implementation programs and capital projects bring these plans to life through implementation. For example, the City adopted guidelines for analyzing transportation impacts based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), representing a shift from measuring and prioritizing the flow of vehicular traffic on City streets to an analysis intended to identify and minimize the greenhouse gas impacts of transportation. Efforts are underway to update the transportation impact fee to reflect multi-modal mobility priorities as well. The report highlights the fact that since the Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in early 2017, 30 miles of bikeway have been added. Important projects underway include the Pacific Avenue Bikeway and the Shoemaker Bridge project, which is reconfiguring the terminus of the 710 and converting highway-standard roadways to a more urban context. The 2020 Mobility Element Implementation Report (Attachment A - 2020 Mobility Element Implementation Annual Report) provides an overview of these and other key accomplishments and status updates. Specific implementation program and project updates are included in an appendix to the report.

Significant progress has been made toward achieving the Mobility Element goals, as this report and the past three Mobility Element annual reports demonstrate. Many individual projects have been completed, and subsequent planning processes are well aligned with the Mobility Element. However, in order to fully achieve the goals of the Mobility Element by the year 2035, the annual report identifies additional considerations that may be needed to further institutionalize the goals, principles and priorities contained within the City's mobility planning framework, including enhancements to the development review process, zoning code changes that would better support multimodal transportation choices such as updated bicycle parking requirements, and changes to the City's capital improvement planning and budgetary processes to better institutionalize the Mobility Element across the City organization.

The Implementation Report was prepared by Development Services with input from other departments, including the Department of Public Works, the Department of Health & Human Services and the Harbor Department. The City has been recognized for its pioneering and successful efforts through its mobility planning framework. In 2017, the CX3 Pedestrian Plan received an Award of Excellence in Transportation Planning from the American Planning Association (APA) California Chapter (APACA) and the Los Angeles (LA) section of the APA. The Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) awarded Long Beach with their Outstanding Achievement in Sustainability, the highest honor awarded by SCAG, in recognition of the City's exemplary planning efforts that enhance the mobility, livability, and sustainability of the Southern California region. As the City continues to develop plans, policies and projects that seek to make all modes of transportation accessible through land use patterns and efforts to reduce greenhouse gases while preparing for the impacts of climate change, the Mobility Element is important now more so than ever in achieving this cohesive vision and direction.

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

This item is not a public hearing; therefore, no public hearing notice is required. However, this item appeared on the Planning Commission meeting agenda that was provided in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Code. No public comments have been received as of the preparation of this report.

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This annual report is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378 as this action is not defined as a project. The annual report is an administrative activity and does not authorize new development. Furthermore, Negative Declaration 01-11 was prepared in accordance with the CEQA Guidelines for the adoption of the 2013-2035 Mobility Element. The Mobility Element helps the City achieve its vision and goals for creating a more sustainable community in which increased use of transit, walking and biking leads to fewer vehicle miles traveled.

Respectfully submitted,



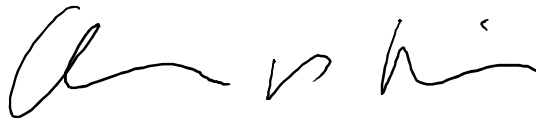
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Attachments: Attachment A - 2020 Mobility Element Implementation Report