



Legislation Text

File #: 15-1176, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to adopt the West Long Beach Livability Implementation Plan and accept Categorical Exemption CE 15-139. (Districts 1,2,6,7,8)

Over the last several decades the City has prepared various plans for West Long Beach. These have included zoning and land use, park improvement, public works and transportation, as well as port impact area mitigation plans, green port policy, and climate action plans. Additionally, capital improvements for the area are covered in the City budget within the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). While these prior planning efforts all serve specific purposes, the West Long Beach Livability Implementation Plan (Livability Plan) provides a single document with an overall framework and implementation plan for improving livability in West Long Beach (Exhibit A - West Long Beach Livability Implementation Plan).

The Board of Harbor Commissioners provided the impetus and funding for this effort. Harbor Department and Development Services staff partnered to create and develop the Livability Plan. The Livability Plan will influence public and private investment in West Long Beach which will impact matters before the City Council in the future. The Harbor Commission reviewed, received and filed the Livability Plan on July 27, 2015, signaling its support. The Planning Commission followed with their action on the Livability Plan on August 20, 2015, recommending approval from the City Council (Exhibit B - Planning Commission Staff Report & Proposed Work Plan).

The purpose of the Livability Plan is to promote livability, environmental quality, community health and safety, and economic vitality. A livable community promotes pride among its residents and creates spaces for walking, bicycling, transit use, outdoor exercise, along with social and economic opportunity for all community members. A mitigation plan focuses solely on achieving reductions in emissions and physical health impacts of those emissions. A standard transportation or infrastructure plan focuses on moving goods and people. The Livability Plan will focus on how systems create or hinder community building, and pull all of these features together to provide, not only a vision, but, an achievable pathway to realize that vision.

The Livability Plan groups projects together to achieve synergistic gains. For example, the West Zone projects include intersecting streetscape, transit, and bicycle improvements. Individually, a bikeway is of limited value, creating opportunity only for those who start and end their journey along its route. Coupled with streetscape and transit improvements, the bikeway is able to open bicycle commuting and recreational opportunities to a host of residents connected by transit, as well as walking opportunities. These improvements have air quality benefits by moving trips from car to foot and bicycle. They also have storm water

benefits from planting within new streetscape improvements. Overall, these improvements create the urban fabric to stimulate private-sector investment and job creation along reinvigorated corridors. (Exhibit A - Page 41, Figure 4.7 Strategy 1).

The public engagement process for this Livability Plan has been extensive. The overall strategy focused on combining two large events with smaller meetings. Workshops were held in the community during December 2014 and March 2015, with over 90 and 60 attendees respectively. Flyers regarding the project were distributed to over 12,000 school children in the area. More than 20 small group meetings were held that ranged from stand-alone meetings to staff attending set meetings of different organizations throughout the community. The resulting Livability Plan attempts to reflect the consensus of input received and pays particular attention to location-specific preferences that were given by participants about the neighborhoods in which they live. Outreach will continue as the individual projects within the Livability Plan move toward funding and construction.

The Livability Plan sets forth three geographically specific strategies with projects appropriate to each specific area (Exhibit A - Page 39, Figure 4.5 All LINC Projects). The area-wide strategies include the following:

- Addressing existing environmental hazards in the home (primarily lead).
- Health promotion through the Healthy Long Beach Program.
- Greenhouse gas reduction through improved energy efficiency.
- Air filtration through tree planting and mechanical filters at schools, daycares, and hospitals.
- Mobile health clinics and other tools to improve health service delivery.

Atop these area-wide service approaches are a host of projects for each area, broadly falling into the categories of streetscape, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, transit improvements, park improvements, and major road projects. The list of projects within the Livability Plan seeks to strike a balance between sufficiently robust and ambitious projects, and the reality of what is possible in the forthcoming decade. Projects are included because they are considered achievable. The implementation strategy is set forth in Chapter 5 of the Livability Plan.

The Livability Plan team includes staff from the Development Services Department and the Harbor Department who will continue coordinating meetings and oversee the Livability Plan's implementation. The Livability Plan includes an evaluation and measurement focus so that the implementation team can continually evaluate their progress and make adjustments as necessary. Available grants and other potential funding sources are included in the Livability Plan to assist the City in implementing these programs. Because the Livability Plan establishes the relationship between component projects and the larger goals and vision, staff anticipates that the Livability Plan will enhance the City's ability to obtain funding for projects that have cumulative and increased benefits. A primary concern of grantors is that projects should fit into a larger program and that program results should be

measured and continuously evaluated for effectiveness. Several case studies are included in Chapter 5 of the Livability Plan that address that concern and show how effective this strategic approach has been in neighboring jurisdictions.

In accordance with the Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, a Categorical Exemption (CE 15-139) was issued for the proposed project (Exhibit C - Categorical Exemption).

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael Mais on October 13, 2015 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on October 16, 2015.

SUSTAINABILITY

A core purpose of the proposed plan is to improve livability, including the quality of the natural and built environment, for the residents of West Long Beach. The project promotes the installation of low-water landscaping, pollution absorbing trees and the use of non-motorized transportation and transit.

City Council action on this matter is not time critical.

The proposed Livability Plan establishes a set of priorities, groups projects into implementation areas and lists available funding sources. As no particular project is approved or obligated at this time, there will be no fiscal impact as a result of the recommended action. The fiscal impact of those actions requiring City Council approval will be brought forward for consideration prior to implementation.

Approve recommendation.

AMY J. BODEK, AICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER