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December 26, 2019

**Subject: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Sidewalk Repair Program (SCH#2016071063)**

The City of Los Angeles (City) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Sidewalk Repair Program (proposed Project) that addresses the manner in which sidewalk repair projects are undertaken pursuant to the City's obligations under the *Willits Settlement Agreement* (Settlement). The City is requesting input on the Draft EIR from public agencies, residents, and other interested project stakeholders.

**Project Description:** Under the proposed Project, the City would adopt a new uncodified ordinance to revise the way sidewalk repairs undertaken pursuant to the Settlement are reviewed and approved, with a primary goal of streamlining the Settlement implementation process. The key components of the ordinance include:

- A ministerial approval process to enable sidewalk repair projects falling within certain specified parameters to proceed upon approval by the City Engineer or a designee, without undergoing further environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
- A streamlined discretionary approval process by the City Engineer or a designee for sidewalk repair projects falling outside the specific parameters for a ministerial sidewalk repair approval;
- A revised Street Tree Retention, Removal and Replacement Policy establishing a 2:1 street tree replacement to removal ratio requirement for years 1-10, 3:1 for years 11-21, and 2:1 for years 22-30, and;
- Mandatory Project Design Features (PDFs) generally consisting of regulatory compliance measures and standard construction conditions and procedures.

**Project Objectives:** The following is a list of objectives for the proposed Project that support the underlying purpose, including the fundamental project objective which is to:

- Ensure the continued and efficient compliance with the requirements of the Settlement while amending the existing program for sidewalk and curb ramp improvements within the City, in accordance with the applicable accessibility requirements, including those required by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The following additional project objectives have also been identified:

- Retain existing street trees that are the cause of sidewalk barriers to the extent feasible, provided the sidewalk improvements would not result in street tree mortality or compromise public safety;
- If the removal of one or more street trees is required, ensure compliance with the City's replacement requirements adopted to ensure no net street tree canopy loss at the end of the Project implementation period; and
- Identify the criteria and process for ministerial approval of future sidewalk improvements and street tree removals and replacements, with the goal of avoiding the need to undertake individualized environmental review of every repair of every City sidewalk or of every street tree removal and replacement and the potential legal challenge to each such approval; thereby streamlining the Settlement implementation and providing certainty to the City and its disabled community.

**Environmental Impacts:** The analysis contained in the Draft EIR determined that the proposed Project would have the potential for significant impacts to Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Noise and Vibration.

- **Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources:** For the large majority of individual sidewalk repair projects under the proposed Project, impacts would be less than significant, and no mitigation measures are required. However, in the rare instances of demolition and/or material alteration of a significant aesthetic, cultural, and/or tribal cultural resource, the impacts would be considered significant and unavoidable where implementation of PDFs would not maintain the significance of the resource. No other feasible mitigation measures have been identified.
- **Noise and Vibration Resource:** The individual sidewalk repair projects under the proposed Project would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to noise and vibration during construction activities at certain distances near sensitive receptors, even with the implementation of PDFs. No other feasible mitigation measures have been identified.

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**Public Review Period:** The Draft EIR public review and comment period begins December 26, 2019 until February 24, 2020. The Draft EIR is available online at <https://sidewalks.lacity.org/>

**Public Meetings:** Provide verbal and/or written comments at the following Public Meetings\*:

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | January 29, 2020<br>5:00 – 7:00pm            | Sunland – Tujunga Branch Library, 7771 Foothill Boulevard, Tujunga, CA 91042            |
| 2 | January 30, 2020<br>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.    | Watts Senior Citizen Center, 1657 E. Century Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90002                |
| 3 | February 5, 2020<br>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.    | Lafayette Multipurpose Community Center, 625 S Lafayette Park Pl, Los Angeles, CA 90057 |
| 4 | February 6, 2020<br>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.    | Reseda Recreation Center, 18411 Victory Blvd, Reseda, CA 91335                          |
| 5 | February 12, 2020<br>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.   | Westchester Senior Citizen Center, 8740 Lincoln Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045             |
| 6 | February 13, 2020<br>6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.   | Normandale Recreation Center, 22400 Halldale Ave, Torrance, CA 90501                    |
| 7 | February 15, 2020<br>10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Robert Louis Stevenson Branch Library, 803 Spence Street, Los Angeles, CA 90023         |

**Comments:** Please send comments on the Draft EIR to:

Shilpa Gupta  
City of Los Angeles  
Public Works, Bureau of Engineering  
Environmental Management Group  
1149 S. Broadway, 6th Floor, Mail Stop 939  
Los Angeles, CA 90015-2213

Comments may also be submitted by e-mail to [shilpa.gupta@lacity.org](mailto:shilpa.gupta@lacity.org) Please remember to:

- 1) Include "SRP DEIR" in the subject line; and
- 2) Include a mailing address in the comment letter.

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Following the close of the comment period on February 24, 2020, the City will consider and prepare responses to the comments received and compile a Final EIR. All responses to comments submitted on the Draft EIR by public agencies will be provided to those agencies at least 10 days prior to certification of the Final EIR. The Board of Public Works and City Council Committee(s) may consider and make recommendations to the Los Angeles City Council regarding the Final EIR and proposed Project. The Los Angeles City Council will make findings regarding the extent and nature of the environmental impacts as described in the Final EIR. The Final EIR will need to be certified by the City prior to making a decision to approve the proposed Project. Public input is encouraged at all public meetings before the City.

The contents of this Notice of Availability have been prepared in accordance with Section 15087 of the CEQA Guidelines. For additional information about the environmental review process, please call (213) 485-4560.

Sincerely,



Shilpa Gupta

Environmental Supervisor I