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January 21, 2025

Miya Edmonson, LDR/CEQA Branch Chief  
Via Jaden Oloresisimo, Project Coordinator  
California Department of Transportation, District 7  
100 South Main Street MS 16  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

*Delivered via email:* Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov

**Re: Caltrans GTS # 07-LA-2022-04309, Response to Agency Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report, La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan**

Dear Jaden Oloresisimo:

The County of Los Angeles (County), Department of the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History has received and reviewed your agency's comment letter dated October 26, 2023, regarding the La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Table 1 in this letter presents responses to the comments provided in your agency's letter. In accordance with the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Sections 15132(d) and 15088, the Final EIR presents the County's responses to comments submitted during the Draft EIR review process. The complete Final EIR is available at following link: <https://tarpits.org/reimagine>. For your convenience, this letter provides the response to comments particular to your agency in conformance with Public Resources Code Section 21092.5(a) and the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(b).

The La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan EIR is currently scheduled for review and certification at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meeting on February 4, 2025.

Your agency's comment letter is reproduced as an attachment to this letter, and numerical annotation has been added as appropriate to delineate and reference the responses to specific comments. Information provided in these responses clarifies, amplifies, or details minor modifications to the Draft EIR that have been incorporated into the Final EIR. No significant changes have been made to the Draft EIR that would require recirculation of the document under the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BB", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bobbette Biddulph  
Senior Environmental Planner

Attachment 1. California Department of Transportation, District 7 Comment Letter

**Table 1. Response to Comments, California Department of Transportation, District 7**

<b>Comment No.</b>	<b>Response</b>
Caltrans-1	<p>The comment serves as an introduction to the comment letter and describes the project.</p> <p>The County would like to thank the commenter for participating in the public review process of the Draft EIR. A copy of this comment letter will be included in the Final EIR, which will be provided to the Board of Supervisors for review when the project is considered for approval. This is not a comment on the analysis contained in the EIR; therefore, no response is necessary.</p>
Caltrans-2	<p>The commenter requests that strategies to reduce speeds and accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians, including visual indicators and physically separated walking and bicycling facilities, be included in the project.</p> <p>The transportation assessment report, prepared by Kittelson &amp; Associates in August 2022 and provided as Appendix J to the EIR, reviewed and provided recommendations to accommodate and improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access in the study area. These recommendations, which were incorporated into Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-1.1, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with Metro to improve transit access and user comfort and encourage visitors to take local bus service or the future Purple Line extension to La Brea Tar Pits, through the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Improve pedestrian wayfinding between the planned Purple Line station, local bus stops, and La Brea Tar Pits.</li> <li>○ Implement bus stop improvements such as shelters along Wilshire Boulevard bus stops that would be used by La Brea Tar Pits visitors.</li> <li>○ Coordinate with Metro and the City of Los Angeles to ensure that safe and comfortable pedestrian facilities (such as ADA curb ramps and continental crosswalks) are available between local bus stops and the project entrances, including at the Curson Avenue/ Wilshire Boulevard intersection.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Coordinate with the City of Los Angeles to implement planned bikeways in the vicinity of the project site and contribute to the implementation of the bikeways. This includes planned bikeways along Wilshire Boulevard and 6th Street.</li> </ul> <p>Through Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-1.1, coordinating would be required with LA Metro and the City of Los Angeles in order to accommodate facilities in the study area that would improve walking and bicycling conditions. As the recommendation is consistent with the EIR, no changes to the EIR were determined to be necessary in response to this comment.</p>
Caltrans-3	<p>The commenter requests that the amount of proposed car parking be reduced and TDM strategies to reduce vehicle demand be implemented.</p> <p>While the overall museum square footage would increase, the project does not propose an increase in the on-site parking supply. In addition, Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-1.1 would require the preparation and implementation of a TDM Program to reduce museum employee and visitor vehicle trips and increase alternative modes such as walking, bicycling, public transit, and rideshare. This mitigation measure consists of strategies to reduce the vehicle demand of both employees and visitors to the site and increase walking, bicycling, and transit trips. As the comment is consistent with the recommendations of the EIR, no changes to the EIR were determined to be necessary in response to this comment.</p>

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**Comment No. Response**


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Caltrans-4	<p>The commenter requests that the bicycle facilities be planned and implemented in the project area in coordination with the City of Los Angeles.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-1.1 of the EIR provides for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the City of Los Angeles to implement planned bikeways in the vicinity of the project site and contribute to the implementation of the bikeways. This includes planned bikeways along Wilshire Boulevard and West 6th Street.</li> </ul> <p>With implementation of this mitigation measure, coordinating with the City of Los Angeles would occur to ensure bicycle facilities in the project area are implemented, as recommended by Caltrans. No changes to the EIR were determined to be necessary in response to this comment.</p>
Caltrans-5	<p>The commenter requests coordination with Caltrans during project construction occur to avoid effects on state facilities.</p> <p>The EIR includes Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1, which requires the development of a CTMP, to be developed by the contractor, approved by the County and LADOT, and implemented to alleviate construction period impacts. The text of Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1 has been revised in this Final EIR as follows to include the recommendations of Caltrans (added text shown in underline):</p> <p>A construction traffic management plan (CTMP) shall be developed by the contractor, approved by the County, <del>and</del> the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), <u>Caltrans, and LA Metro</u>, and implemented to alleviate construction period impacts. The CTMP will include, but may not be limited to, the following restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prohibition of construction worker parking on nearby residential streets.</li> <li>• Prohibition of construction-related vehicles parking or staging on surrounding public streets.</li> <li>• <u>Prohibition of construction-related parking or staging on streets with bus service.</u></li> <li>• Temporary pedestrian and vehicular traffic controls (i.e., flag persons) during all construction activities adjacent to public rights-of-way to improve traffic flow on public roadways.</li> <li>• Safety precautions for pedestrians and bicyclists through such measures as alternate routing and protection barriers shall be implemented as appropriate.</li> <li>• Scheduling of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc., shall occur outside the commuter peak hours to the extent feasible.</li> <li>• <u>Avoidance of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc. from routing along congested local and state facilities, to the extent feasible.</u></li> <li>• <u>Relocation and accommodation (as needed) of adjacent bus stops and access, to the extent feasible.</u></li> </ul> <p>These revisions do not affect any conclusions or significance determinations provided in the Draft EIR. According to State CEQA Guidelines 15088.5:</p> <p>Recirculation is not required where the new information added to the EIR merely clarifies or amplifies or makes insignificant modifications in an adequate EIR.</p> <p>As demonstrated above, the revised text in Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1 does not differ considerably from the original measure that was described in the Draft EIR.</p>

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**Comment No. Response**


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Instead, these revisions merely include further detail and refinements to better achieve the goal of the measure, which is to require the County to prepare a thorough construction traffic management plan. As no significant modifications have been made, recirculation of the EIR is not required.

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Caltrans-6

The commenter requests coordination with Caltrans during project construction, including application for a Caltrans transportation permit (if required). In addition, the commenter requests that construction effects do not occur on state facilities through implementation of a construction traffic control plan.

The EIR includes Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1, which requires the development of a CTMP, to be developed by the contractor, approved by the County and the LADOT, and implemented to alleviate construction period impacts. The text of Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1 has been revised in this Final EIR as follows to include consideration of construction activities along state facilities (added text shown in underline):

A construction traffic management plan (CTMP) shall be developed by the contractor, approved by the County, ~~and the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT), Caltrans, and LA Metro,~~ and implemented to alleviate construction period impacts. The CTMP will include, but may not be limited to, the following restrictions:

- Prohibition of construction worker parking on nearby residential streets.
- Prohibition of construction-related vehicles parking or staging on surrounding public streets.
- Prohibition of construction-related parking or staging on streets with bus service.
- Temporary pedestrian and vehicular traffic controls (i.e., flag persons) during all construction activities adjacent to public rights-of-way to improve traffic flow on public roadways.
- Safety precautions for pedestrians and bicyclists through such measures as alternate routing and protection barriers shall be implemented as appropriate.
- Scheduling of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc., shall occur outside the commuter peak hours to the extent feasible.
- Avoidance of construction-related deliveries, haul trips, etc. from routing along congested local and state facilities, to the extent feasible.
- Relocation and accommodation (as needed) of adjacent bus stops and access, to the extent feasible.

These revisions do not affect any conclusions or significance determinations provided in the Draft EIR. According to State CEQA Guidelines 15088.5:

Recirculation is not required where the new information added to the EIR merely clarifies or amplifies or makes insignificant modifications in an adequate EIR.

As demonstrated above, the revised text in Mitigation Measure TRA/mm-4.1 does not differ considerably from the original measure that was described in the Draft EIR. Instead, these revisions merely include further detail and refinements to better achieve the goal of the measure, which is to require the County to prepare a thorough construction traffic management plan. As no significant modifications have been made, recirculation of the EIR is not required.

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**Comment No. Response**

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Caltrans-7      The comment serves as a closing remark. No changes to the EIR were determined to be necessary in response to this closing comment. The County appreciates Caltrans' attention to this important project.

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**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life*

October 26, 2023

Leslie Negritto  
County of Los Angeles  
900 Exposition Blvd  
Los Angeles, CA 90007

RE: La Brea Tar Pits Master Plan Project -  
Draft Environmental Impact Report  
(DEIR)  
SCH # 2022020344  
Vic. I-10, SR-2/PM LA 8.087, 1.362  
GTS # 07-LA-2022-04309

Dear Leslie Negritto:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The proposed project would renovate the existing George C. Page Museum and add a new one-story museum building, increasing the total museum square footage from 63,000 gsf to 105,000 gsf. The new building would have additional space for exhibits, classrooms, and laboratories. The existing parking lot would be shifted to the northeast and add up to 5-10 additional parking spaces. Within Hancock Park, the project would add a pedestrian path, enhanced recreation areas, additional seating and rest areas, and new site entry plazas at Wilshire Blvd/S. Curson Ave. and on W. 6th Street. Phased construction would occur over approximately 7 to 10 years. The County of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Caltrans-1

The closest state facilities are the I-10, and SR-2 (Santa Monica Blvd). After reviewing the project's DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

- The Los Angeles County Bicycle Master Plan states that their benefits model predicts that by 2030, bike ridership will increase up to 246% in the Westside Planning area. Given this trend, Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to consider any reduction in vehicle speeds to benefit pedestrian and bicyclist safety, as there is a direct link between impact speeds and the likelihood of fatality or serious injury. The most effective methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles is through physical design and geometrics.
  - These methods include the construction of physically separated facilities such as Class IV bikeways, wide sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing

Caltrans-2

Leslie Negritto  
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distances through roadway narrowing. Visual indicators such as, pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage, and striping should be used in addition to physical design improvements to indicate to motorists that they can expect to see and yield to people walking or riding bikes.

↑  
**Caltrans-2**  
(cont'd)

- In accordance with the Los Angeles County 2035 General Plan, the Metro Purple (D Line) Extension Transit Project is currently undergoing construction and will service riders to the Wilshire/Fairfax Station by 2040. To increase ridership and lower total VMT trips, Caltrans recommends reducing the amount of proposed car parking.

↑  
**Caltrans-3**

- Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that the amount of car parking supplied encourages driving and can undermine a project's ability to encourage public transit and active modes of transportation. For any project to better promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as an alternative to building car parking.

- The site is located between several Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) plans where needs have been identified to for walking and bicycling trip potential. In accordance with the planned Metro Wilshire/Fairfax Station, Caltrans recommends that the Lead Agency works with the city on implementing Class IV bike lanes along the main arterial roads to create connected corridors for bike and pedestrian visitors. For more information regarding CAT plans, please see:

↑  
**Caltrans-4**

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/835bb16c4e3141f2b4f3e6dae7880fd3>

- For the duration of the construction period, Caltrans recommends the following:
  - Work with Caltrans Office of Permits, Multi-Modal Unit, for a designated truck route for construction trucks to transport construction equipment to and from the construction sites.
  - Construction vehicles/equipment should use alternative routes to avoid congested state facilities, especially during peak hours.
  - Cover construction trucks with tarpaulin to avoid debris spillage onto State facilities.
  - Inform Caltrans of any additional impacts to the I-10 ramps should it occur during the construction phase.

↑  
**Caltrans-5**

*"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment."*

Leslie Negritto  
October 26, 2023  
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As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials that requires the use of oversized transport vehicles on State Highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends that the Project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing these issues for Caltrans' review.

Caltrans-6

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jaden Oloresisimo, the project coordinator, at [Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov) and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2022-04309.

Caltrans-7

Sincerely,

*Anthony Higgins for*

MIYA EDMONSON  
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse