

# Division of Local Assistance (DLA) Glossary

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## Numerical

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### A

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<b>Action</b>	A highway or transit project proposed for FHWA funding. It also includes activities such as joint and multiple use permits, changes in access control, etc., which may or may not involve a commitment of federal funds.
<b>Administering Agency</b>	The state or a city, county, other public agency, or nonprofit organizations, that plan, design, advertise, opens bids, award and administer the contract. They are frequently referred to as Local Public Agencies (LPAs).
<b>Affected Environment</b>	The physical features, land, area, or areas to be influenced, or impacted, by an alternative alignment under consideration. This term also includes various social and environmental factors and conditions pertinent to an area.
<b>Alternative</b>	One of a number of specific transportation improvement proposals, alignments, options, design choices, etc., in a defined study area. For a transportation project, alternatives to be studied normally include the no-action alternative, an upgrading of the existing roadway alternative, new transportation routes and locations, transportation systems management strategies, multi-modal alternatives, if warranted, and any combinations of the above.
<b>Area of Potential Effect (APE)</b>	A term used in Section 106 (Cultural Resource studies) to describe the area in which historic resources may be affected by a federal undertaking.
<b>Avoidance Alternative</b>	A general term used to refer to any alignment proposal, which has been either developed, modified, shifted, or downsized to specifically avoid impacting one or more resources.

### B

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### C

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<b>California Division Office (CADO)</b>	The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) state Division Office. The Division Offices are local field offices that provide leadership, guidance, and direction to State Departments of Transportation in the project development and delivery of transportation projects. Working collaboratively with State partners, FHWA Division Offices ensure that the nation's roads, bridges and tunnels are safe and continue to support economic growth and environmental sustainability: <a href="https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm">https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/about/field.cfm</a> .
<b>California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)</b>	State environmental law requiring State and LPAs to consider the environmental impacts of their decisions when approving public and private projects. LPAs are the CEQA lead agency for local agency transportation projects off the SHS, but Caltrans is the CEQA lead agency for local agency transportation projects on the SHS unless otherwise delegated.
<b>Categorical Exclusion (CE)</b>	One of three (3) Classes of Action which prescribes the level of documentation required in the NEPA process. The CEs are Class II Actions, which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the environment; therefore, neither an EA, nor an EIS is required. Under NEPA Delegation, there are two means of categorically excluding a project: 1) Section 6004 Categorical Exclusions and 2) Section 6005 Categorical Exclusions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>6004 Categorical Exclusions: On June 7, 2007, Caltrans and FHWA entered into an MOU pursuant to Section 6004 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Section 6004 MOU assigns to Caltrans authority and responsibility for CE determinations under the 23 CFR 771.117(c) list and 23 CFR 771.117(d) list, plus those activities specifically listed in Appendix A – Assigned Categories of Activities of the MOU.</li><li>6005 Categorical Exclusions: On June 22, 2007, Caltrans and FHWA entered into an MOU pursuant to Section 6005 of SAFETEA-LU. Under Section 6005 MOU, Caltrans assumes responsibility for CE determinations for projects that are not on the c or d list or the Appendix A list, but for which a CE classification is appropriate under 23 CFR 771.117 A and B. Under Section 6005 MOU, Caltrans was also assigned and assumed, the USDOT Secretary's responsibilities for environmental review, interagency consultation, and other regulatory compliance-related action pertaining to the review or approval of CEs.</li></ul>

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## **Categorical Exemption/Categorical Exclusion Form**

Joint state/local form used to document the applicable MOU under which the CE determination has been made.

## **Construction (CON)/Construction Engineering (CE)**

This phase includes the work of project advertising through construction, preparation of as built plans, final estimates, and payments. It includes all of the post-award activities necessary for the contracting agency to inspect, manage, and oversee the construction of a federal-aid construction project. This phase must be authorized prior to advertising, and CE must be separately identified in this authorization. Note: CE can include the cost of advertising and award preparation, but only after the phase has been authorized.

## **Construction Phase**

The phase of the transportation project development process that involves the physical act of building by a contractor the proposed project to all plans and specifications developed during final design.

## **Consultant**

A private individual, corporation, or other business organization that may be selected to provide architectural, engineering, environmental, or other related technical services for an LPA project.

## **Cumulative Impact**

Cumulative impact is the impact on the environment, which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

# D

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## **Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number**

A unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier required for all federal grant applicants by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

## **Delegated Project**

A project under 23 USC 106(c) Assumption by States of Responsibilities of the Secretary (formerly State Authorized) in which Caltrans has authority for all aspects of the project except those activities which may not be delegated by federal law (requiring FHWA approval). Prior to September 2007 these projects were referred to as State-Authorized projects defined by set criteria (rather than risk) such as non-Interstate 3R projects, Interstate construction projects under \$1 million, non-NHS projects, etc. Over 99% of Local Assistance projects are delegated in which Caltrans or the local agency has approval authority for most project level activities.

## **Department of Transportation**

The Department of Transportation of the State of California, as created by law; also referred to as the Department, State or Caltrans.

## **Direct Effects**

Effects caused by a given action and occurring at the same time and place. Changes in noise levels; fill discharges in wetlands; and changes in visual conditions are some examples of direct effects.

## **Disadvantaged Business Enterprise**

A for-profit small business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. One or more such individuals must also control the management and daily business operations. These individuals must be citizens (or lawfully admitted permanent residents) of the United States and (1) any individual who a federal-aid recipient finds to be a socially and economically disadvantaged individual per 49 CFR 26 on a case-by-case basis, or (2) who are either Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, Subcontinent Asian Americans (persons whose origin are from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives Islands, Nepal or Sri Lanka), Women, or any other group found to be socially and economically disadvantaged as determined by the Small Business Administration (see 49 CFR 26).

## **District**

A subdivision of the Department organized to administer the affairs for a specific geographical area and for the Local Public Agencies (LPAs) in that area: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me>.

## **Division of Local Assistance (DLA)**

The office in Caltrans headquarters that is responsible for administering, managing, and implementing the federal-aid highway and state local assistance programs.

## **District Local Assistance Engineer (DLAE)**

The individual in each district responsible for providing services and assistance to the Local Public Agencies (LPAs).

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## E

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<b>E-76</b>	Federal-aid program form titled Authorization to Proceed. It provides federal authorization to begin reimbursable work for a specific phase of work.
<b>Early Coordination</b>	Communication undertaken near the beginning of the transportation project development process to exchange information and work cooperatively with agencies and the public in an effort to determine the type and scope of studies, the level of analysis, and related study requirements.
<b>Effects</b>	Includes: (a) Direct effects that are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place, (b) Indirect effects that are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. The terms effect and impact are synonymous under NEPA. Effects include ecological, aesthetic, historic, cultural, economic, social, or health, whether direct, indirect or cumulative.
<b>Environment</b>	The complex of social, natural, and cultural condition, which are present in the physical surroundings.
<b>Environmental Assessment (EA)</b>	One of three (3) Classes of Action which prescribes the level of documentation required in the NEPA process. EAs are Class III Actions in which the significance of the environmental impact is not clearly established. All actions that are not Class I (EISs) or Class II (CEs) are Class III. Class III Actions require the preparation of an EA to determine the appropriate environmental document required.
<b>Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)</b>	One of three (3) NEPA Classes of Action which prescribes the level of documentation required in the NEPA process. EISs are Class I Actions. These are actions that significantly affect the environment and for which an EIS must be prepared. Examples of Class I Actions include a highway project of four or more lanes on a new location, and new construction or extension of a separate roadway not located within an existing highway facility, etc.

## F

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<b>Federal-aid</b>	Refers to federal funds provided for the development of surface transportation and administered by the FHWA. Generally, these funds are derived from multi-year surface transportation acts, Title I Federal-aid Highways and other Titles. It also includes FHWA administered funds from previous acts frequently titled Highway Acts.
<b>Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)</b>	The federal agency responsible for administering the Federal-aid Highway Program.
<b>Field Review</b>	A general term to describe a site visit for the purpose of gathering or verifying data, defining scopes of work, performing analyses, and making decisions for specific projects.
<b>Final Design Phase</b>	The phase of the transportation project development process, which involves the preparation of detailed, working drawings, as well as specifications and estimates for approved transportation projects.
<b>Finance Letter</b>	A document required by Caltrans Local Programs Accounting and submitted by the administering agency to Caltrans with information required as backup for the federal-aid/state project agreement.
<b>Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)</b>	A document by a federal agency that briefly presents the reasons why an action will not have a significant effect on the environment and for which an environmental impact statement, therefore, will not be prepared.
<b>Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (FSTIP)</b>	Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, a four-year list of all state and local transportation projects proposed for federal surface transportation funding with the state. This is developed by Caltrans with cooperation of the MPOs and in consultation with the local non-urbanized government. The FSTIP includes the FTIPs, which are incorporated by reference and other rural federally funded projects. The FSTIP, including incorporated FTIPs is only valid for use after FHWA/FTA approval.
<b>Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP)</b>	Federal Transportation Improvement Program, a four-year list of all transportation projects proposed for federal surface transportation funding within the planning area of one of the eighteen Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the State. These are only valid for reference when incorporated into the FSTIP and approved by FHWA/FTA.

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**Federal Transit Administration (FTA)** The federal agency responsible for administering the Federal Transit Program.

**Fully Funded** As related to the NEPA document, projects must be fully funded and shown in the applicable FTIP/RTP before Caltrans can approve the related NEPA document. Partial funding of a project may get their Preliminary Engineering (PE) started but the environmental NEPA document is not approvable without the total funding.

## G

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## H

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## I

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**Impacts** A term to describe the positive or negative effects upon the natural or human environment as a result of a specific project or projects.

**Independent Utility** The ability of a transportation improvement to be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made.

**Indirect Effects** Effects caused by a given action, occurring later in time, or farther removed in distance, but which are reasonably foreseeable. Induced changes to land use patterns, population density or growth rate are examples.

## J

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## K

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## L

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**Level-of-Service** Also known, as Traffic Service. LOS is a qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream. LOS is based on service measures such as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort and convenience. LOS is also affected by conditions such as number of access points, lane width, number of lanes, and percentage of large vehicles. Six levels of service are defined by letter designations from A to F with LOS A representing the best operating conditions, and LOS F the worst.

**Local Assistance Procedures Manual (LAPM)**

The Local Assistance Procedures Manual describes the processes, procedures, documents, authorization, approvals and certifications, which are required in order to received federal-aid and/or state funds for many types of local transportation projects.

**Local Assistance Program Guidelines (LAPG)**

The Local Assistance Program Guidelines manual provides local project sponsors with a complete description of the federal and state programs available for financing local public transportation related facilities.

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<b>Local Assistance Project</b>	A local surface transportation project funded with federal and/or state funds for the operation, maintenance, and acquisition or development of facilities or land, provided the local entity retains ownership after completion of the project.
<b>Local Programs Procedures (LPP)</b>	Documents used for deployment of new procedures and policies between annual updates of Local Assistance manual, guidelines and programs. Each procedure is numbered according to calendar year and order in which released.
<b>Local Public Agency (LPA)</b>	A California City, county, tribal government or other local public agency. In many instances this term is used loosely to include nonprofit organizations.
<b>Locode</b>	Numeric identifier for each local agency or administering agency (assigned by the Division of Local Assistance).

## M

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<b>Major Project</b>	Defined as a project with a total estimated cost of \$500 million or more that is receiving Federal financial assistance. FHWA also has the discretion to designate a project with a total cost of less than \$500 million as a Major Project.
<b>Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)</b>	Federally mandated regional organizations responsible for comprehensive transportation planning and programming in urbanized areas. Work products include the Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, and the Unified Planning Work Program.
<b>Mitigation Measures</b>	Specific design commitments made during the environmental evaluation and study process, which serve to moderate or lessen impacts deriving from the proposed action. In accordance with CEQ, mitigation includes avoidance, minimization, rectification, reduction, and compensation.

## N

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<b>National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)</b>	Federal environmental law requiring federal agencies to consider the environmental impacts of their actions, evaluate least damaging alternatives, and ensure decisions are made in the public's best interest based on a balanced consideration of the need for safe and efficient transportation.
<b>National Highway System (NHS)</b>	A specially Designated Highway System established by the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act of 1991 and adopted by the United States Congress. "Enhanced NHS" refers to the roads expanded or enhanced by MAP21; Section 1104 of MAP21 added to the NHS those roads that were at the time functionally classified as principal arterials, but not yet part of the NHS.
<b>No Action</b>	An alternative that is used as the basis to measure the impacts and benefits of the preferred alternative(s) in an Environmental Assessment or EIS. The No Action alternative consists of the existing conditions on the roadway, plus any safety or maintenance improvements, which have been identified in the CDOT 5-Year Transportation Improvement Program.
<b>No-Build Alternative</b>	Normally includes short-term, minor restoration types of activities (e.g., safety and maintenance improvements) that maintain continuing operation of an existing facility. The no-build alternative serves as a baseline for the comparison of other alternatives.
<b>Notice of Intent (NOI)</b>	A notice published in the Federal Register that an EIS will be prepared and considered. The notice must briefly describe the proposed action and possible alternatives, describe the agency's proposed scoping process including whether, when, and where any scoping meetings will be held, and state the name and address of a person within the agency who can answer questions about the proposed action and the EIS.

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## O

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## P

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<b>Permit</b>	Written permission given by a governmental agency to take certain action during specific steps of the transportation project development process. Permits may include permission for any construction, excavation, depositing of material, or other work in navigable waters (Corps of Engineers), permission required for the discharge of dredged, or fill material into waters of the United States (Corps of Engineers), and permission to construct bridges, causeways, and drawbridges in navigable waters (U.S. Coast Guard). A permit may also refer certain other clearances or certifications such as a clearance from the Federal Aviation Administration for proposed highway construction in the vicinity of public use and military airports, and water quality certifications for the licensing of an action that would result in a discharge into regulated waters. These approvals, plus certain others relating to solid waste management, underground storage tanks, coastal zone areas, etc., involve approvals and documentation commonly referred to as permits.
<b>Phase</b>	For the purposes of federal-aid authorization, the development of a project is broken into stages or phases: Preliminary Engineering, Right of Way and Construction. Each of these phases must be individually authorized, usually at different times in the development of a project.
<b>Preliminary Engineering (PE)</b>	This phase includes all project initiation and development activities undertaken after its inclusion in the approved FSTIP through the completion of PS&E. It may include preliminary Right of Way engineering and investigations necessary to complete the NEPA document.
<b>Project Development</b>	The overall process of advancing a transportation project from concept to implementation. Project development typically encompasses environmental and engineering tasks including planning, location, preliminary design, final design, and construction.
<b>Project Need</b>	A detailed explanation of the specific transportation problems or deficiencies, which have generated the search for improvements. It should refer to technical information, as necessary, such as measures of traffic efficiency, or demand (origin-destination patterns, modal links, queue lengths, motorist delays, level of service, etc.), and other goals (economic development, safety improvement, legislative directives, etc.). Much of this information should be generated by the transportation planning process at a very early stage. The explanation of need should be a problem statement discussion, not a solution oriented discussion.
<b>Project Purpose</b>	A broad statement of the overall intended objective to be achieved by a proposed transportation facility. Normally, the purpose can be defined in just a few sentences. For instance, it may address expanded capacity in a given transportation corridor to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, or improved access to a given area or community.
<b>Public Hearing</b>	A meeting designed to afford the public the fullest opportunity to express opinions on a transportation project. A verbatim record (transcript) of the proceedings is made part of the project record.
<b>Public Involvement</b>	These activities, which present information to the public, seek public comments and which serve to ensure consideration of public opinion.
<b>Public Meeting</b>	An announced meeting conducted by transportation officials designed to facilitate participation in the decision-making process, and to assist the public in gaining an informed view of a proposed project at any level of the transportation project development process. Also, such a gathering may be referred to as a public information meeting.

## Q

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## R

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<b>Record of Decision (ROD)</b>	The ROD documents the Secretary of Transportation's decision to approve the Preferred Alternative as described in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
<b>Record Retention</b>	Project records must be kept for at least 3 years after FHWA's final payment of the final voucher per 2 CFR 200.333.
<b>Responsible Charge</b>	A full time, public employee of the local agency qualified to ensure that the work delivered under contract is complete, accurate, and consistent with the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract must be in responsible charge of each contract or project. The regulation is silent about engineering credentials. Thus, the person in "responsible charge" of local agency administered projects need not be an engineer. This requirement applies even when consultants are providing construction engineering services. Ref: 8-4-2011 FHWA Memo Responsible Charge.
<b>Right of Way (R/W)</b>	This phase includes the work necessary to appraise and acquire project right of way, relocate individuals or businesses, and revise or relocate utilities.

## S

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<b>Streets and Highways Code (S&amp;H)</b>	California Streets and Highways Code, this code contains many of the laws governing funding and development of local streets and roads projects.
<b>Scope</b>	Scope consists of the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in a NEPA document.
<b>Scope of Work</b>	A detailed description of tasks is prepared in advance of engineering and environmental work to explicitly define the contents of studies.
<b>Section 4(f)</b>	Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 permits the use of land for a federally-funded transportation project from a significant publicly owned park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic site when it has been determined that: (1) there are no feasible and prudent alternatives to such use, and (2) the project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the property.
<b>Significant Impacts</b>	Any number of social, environmental, or economic effects, or influences which may be brought about as a result of the implementation of a transportation improvement. Significant impacts may include effects, which are direct, secondary, or cumulative. The term significant is used and interpreted by the FHWA in determining which type of NEPA document is appropriate. Categorical exclusions are those actions, which do not involve significant effects. Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) projects in most cases can and do involve significant impacts.
<b>Significantly</b>	As used in NEPA requires consideration of both context and intensity. Context means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Intensity refers to the severity of the impact.
<b>State Funds</b>	As used in this manual, includes the state funds provided to local agencies for specific transportation projects and programs administered by the DLA. State funds are currently provided for the following projects: Bicycle Transportation Account, Proposition 116 Bicycle Program, Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation (EEM), Federal Apportionment Exchange, State Match programs, Proposition 1B Bond Program, and State Transportation Improvement Program. The LAPG further defines these programs.
<b>Stewardship Agreement</b>	A signed agreement between the FHWA and Caltrans defining the extent to which Caltrans and FHWA have project approval and oversight responsibilities.
<b>State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)</b>	A five-year list of projects proposed in RTIPs and the Proposed STIP that are approved and adopted by the California Transportation Commission (CTC).
<b>Study Area</b>	An identified amount of land or topography, selected, and defined at the outset of engineering, or environmental evaluations, which are sufficiently adequate in size to fully identify, analyze, document impacts and effects for proposed projects within its boundaries.

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## T

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### Transportation Project Development Process

An interactive, multi-phase series of activities typically spanning a period of years which involve comprehensive planning, prioritization, detailed engineering and environmental studies, and agency and public involvement which lead to the selection, design, and construction of identified transportation improvements.

- 23 USC -The section (Title 23) of the United States Code containing laws relating to highways.
- 23 CFR -The section (Title 23) of the Code of Federal Regulations containing regulations (general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register) relating to highways. Not included are regulations based on Civil Rights requirements in Title 49, the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Policies, and other federal laws and regulations.

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## V

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## W

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