

From: Joshua Cohen

Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2016 1:48 PM

To: 'JAMES.K.WILLIAMS@LACITY.ORG' <JAMES.K.WILLIAMS@LACITY.ORG>

Subject: Support Mobility Plan 2035 with bike lanes on Westwood and Central

Dear Commissioners:

I respectfully urge you to support the Department of City Planning's staff recommendation, which keeps Westwood Blvd and Central Ave in Mobility Plan 2035.

This plan takes a balanced approach to providing high quality transportation options by providing complete, functional networks for people using all forms of transportation.

Piecemeal implementation of these networks undermines the plan's goal to provide safe, accessible, and reliable transportation for all people.

This council owes all citizens of its great City a safe, efficient way to get from where they can afford to live to where they go to school and/or work.

Innumerable cyclists in in both Westwood and Central need safe infrastructure to protect them against the dangers of sharing the road with motor vehicles. Both areas host major world universities with low- to no-income students who can only afford bicycles to get from where they can afford to live to school, often with links to transit in between.

Bicycles also solve the first-mile, last-mile problem that plagues this City's diffused transit network. This is particularly true of Westwood, where the expanded Expo line promises to connect UCLA to low-income students, many of whom need to live with their parents in areas throughout the City far more affordable than Westwood. To deprive those students of protection deprives them of mobility in every sense of the word.

These protected bicycle lanes will also promote cycling throughout the City, thus helping the city meet its regional targets under SB 375. The US Supreme Court in *Massachusetts v. EPA* ruled that greenhouse gases (GHGs) are a threat to the health and safety of the global population. Vehicular emissions comprise between 35-40% of the State's GHG emissions. Consequently, the State legislature passed SB 375, the [Sustainable Communities Act](#), which imposes on municipalities an obligation to meet regional targets for GHG emissions reductions from passenger vehicle use. Obviously, more bikes equals fewer emissions.

Merchants' protestations that bike lanes will impact their revenues are unavailing. The overwhelming evidence is that protected bicycle lanes [boost revenues](#).

The proposed Westwood Blvd. bicycle lanes will mitigate traffic on the Westside. [This recent article](#) illustrates how, particularly near the 405, congestion has rendered Westside roadways impassible. Obviously, more bikes will reduce traffic. [Just look at New York](#), where bicycle lanes have actually *increased* vehicular flow.

The more connected and comprehensive the network is, the more likely commuters in other parts of town will leave their cars in their driveways and bike instead. Even now, a [bicyclist beats a bus and a car](#) in a cross-town commute. Now, so doing needs to be made safe enough that other potential cyclists will be encouraged to do so.

Cut-through traffic in neighborhoods adjacent to the proposed bike lanes can be mitigated. A multitude of low-cost, highly-effective solutions are available to restrict vehicular traffic to arterial roads. Urban planners are well-versed in their efficacy and implementation.

Keeping the proposed protected bicycle lanes in the plan as intended demonstrates this Council's commitment to protect all citizens of our great City. Eliminating them would similarly demonstrate an abandonment of that obligation.

Now is the time for bold leadership. The citizens of our great City needs to put this debate behind them and move forward in implementing a just, equitable and comprehensive infrastructure that accounts for the needs of everyone, not just those who can afford cars.

I therefore urge you to support the staff recommendation and maintain a balanced Mobility Plan 2035.

Respectfully,

Joshua C. Cohen
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