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January 9, 2018

Council President Herb J. Wesson, Jr. and Members of the Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles City Council
200 N. Spring Street, Room 435
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Via email: richard.williams@lacity.org

RE: CF # 14-0163-S3 Sidewalk Repair Program

Dear Honorable Council President Herb J. Wesson, Jr. and City Council Members,

The Los Angeles Vision Zero Alliance strongly encourages the Los Angeles City Council to **keep the Vision Zero High Injury Network in the Sidewalk Repair Program prioritization methodology.**

The LA Vision Zero Alliance is a coalition of 23 member organizations and a dozen individuals dedicated to developing safer, healthier communities and a more equitable city for people walking, bicycling, and driving. Many Vision Zero Alliance members serve on the Bureau of Engineering (BOE) Sidewalk Repair Program Community Advisory Committee, including AARP California, CALIF, Investing in Place, Los Angeles Walks, and Safe Routes to School National Partnership.

We disagree with the Budget and Finance Council Committee's recommendation to remove proximity to the Vision Zero High Injury Network from consideration when prioritizing sidewalk repair requests across the City of Los Angeles. The Committee's preference for Incident Reports -- the number of claims received from the City Attorney's Office and the number of service requests registered and tracked through MyLA311 or the Sidewalk Repair Program website -- is inequitable and inadequate.

The Vision Zero Alliance urges the Los Angeles City Council to retain the High Injury Network for three reasons: social equity, program alignment, and stakeholder support.

- **Social Equity:** The Vision Zero High Injury Network (HIN) identifies Los Angeles streets with a higher incidence of severe and fatal traffic collisions. The Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) developed the tool by analyzing five years of traffic collision data as well as data from the LA County Department of Public Health. Public health data provided information about social equity and health outcomes, and highlighted systemic health disparities within low-income communities and communities of color. These disparities are connected to many factors, including the historical disinvestment and underinvestment in the construction, maintenance, and safe design of streets and sidewalks of these neighborhoods.



The Vision Zero High Injury Network is the only element of the Sidewalk Repair Program prioritization scheme that incorporates a consideration of social equity. Though not a perfect tool of equity measurement, the HIN is one of few transportation planning methodologies that reflects the disproportionate need for severe safety improvements in our most vulnerable communities. By removing the High Injury Network from the Sidewalk Repair Program methodology and placing more emphasis on Incident Reports (i.e. claims and service requests) the City favors communities where residents are more likely to file claims and more likely to submit service requests: those with more access to information and more time, knowledge, and skills to report needed repairs. Removing the High Injury Network would lead to the inequitable distribution of public resources and would perpetuate the neglect of particular neighborhoods that most need and deserve infrastructure investment.

- **Program Alignment:** The HIN identifies where LADOT has planned or completed projects that provide safety benefits to people walking. A consideration of proximity to the HIN when prioritizing sidewalk repair requests offers a chance for interdepartmental coordination, and a more holistic approach to improving the built environment. When BOE sidewalk repairs align with LADOT intersection and roadway enhancements, an entire path of travel improves, not just one aspect of a network. With program alignment, people experience a more complete, meaningful, and noticeable quality-of-life improvement from door to door, rather than simply from door to corner (where there may or may not be a curb ramp and crosswalk).

The Sidewalk Repair Program is about more than trip-and-fall incidents. It is about a coordinated and cohesive transportation network that accommodates travelers of all abilities, ages, and modes. Retaining the HIN in the City's Sidewalk Repair Program is a step towards better City interdepartmental coordination by using an established Citywide prioritization methodology as a relevant and important measure for a related City program.

- **Stakeholder Support:** The Bureau of Engineering Community Advisory Committee, a group BOE assembled precisely to provide critical stakeholder input on the development of the Sidewalk Repair Program, recommended including the High Injury Network in the Program's prioritization scheme. Additionally, LADOT determined the criteria that would establish the City's High Injury Network through a series of stakeholder engagement sessions and surveys. The priorities of these groups and individuals should not be discounted, but should be upheld by our policy-makers as important contributions.

Again, the Vision Zero Alliance urges City Council members to keep the Vision Zero High Injury Network in the Sidewalk Repair Program prioritization methodology.

We appreciate your consideration. Should you have any questions, please reach out to me at emilia@losangeleswalks.org or 508-916-7863.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Emilia Crotty'.

Emilia Crotty
Executive Director, Los Angeles Walks
Coordinator of the Los Angeles Vision Zero Alliance



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