

*Support Vision Zero efforts with Measure M Local Return. RE: Council File #16-0395 and Council File #16-0187*

Hello, this message is with regards to the motions above on the subject of how to allocate Measure M Local Return monies.

On the subject of #16-0395, the motion calling for the 2/3rds allocation to fund road repair, I find that this is another giveaway to cars and not to people. I say this as a driver, who has dealt with my fair share of potholes. I also say this as pedestrian, transit rider, and bicyclist. The fact is that while the motion mentions sidewalks, such a large allocation for only road-bed repairs will do nothing for other road users.

If anything, the reverse should be happening with the 2/3rds dedicated to sidewalks, bicyclists, and pedestrians/transit riders. If we want our road-bed repairs to last, we need less people driving. Better sidewalks, bike-lanes, and pedestrian safety treatments will help encourage people to walk, bike, or use the bus and train.

Specifically on the issue of sidewalks, there are so many neighborhoods that have uprooted sidewalks or not enough sidewalks at all. I live in the East San Fernando Valley. Our sidewalks are of variable condition. Sometimes they're impassable because of tree roots. Other times, there is only one sidewalk on the one side of the street or no sidewalk at all. A specific example would be Haskell Avenue between Parthenia Street and Roscoe Boulevard. On Monday of this week, I had to pick up my brother who is in a day program for people with disabilities at New Horizons (at the intersection of Parthenia and Haskell). I had to walk with him to Roscoe Boulevard, a not particularly far distance away, to catch a bus. Unfortunately, there is a stretch of the street where the speed limit is at least 35 m.p.h (with cars regularly going 40 m.p.h) and there are no sidewalks! In the mornings, I've seen people from New Horizons have to walk in the street next to fast moving traffic. It's inherently unsafe. All they have is a dirt path covered with broken bits of asphalt before having to walk into the street itself. My brother has physical impairments. He struggles walking on such an uneven and dangerous surface.

On the subject of #16-0187, allocating the Valley's "fair share," I find this to be very disingenuous. Valley leaders decided that it was best to spend past Measure R money on freeway widening of the 405 and 5 Freeways. We already have seen the results of the 405 widening. Less accidents, which is fine, but infinitely longer delays.

You may find it strange to see a San Fernando Valley resident object to getting more money. I object out of fairness. The motion doesn't even specify how said money would be specifically allocated and it appears that on approval we'd just get more money, most likely to be used for more road repairs, road widening, and what-have-you. I'd be fine with allocating more money to the benefit of pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders, but the motion just looks to take, take, take. There are other parts of the city where this money to go to better use, especially in the denser, working-class areas. That said, I live in Panorama City which is the densest neighborhood in the Valley and houses many working-class residents.

Our neighborhood is home to some of the most dangerous intersections in the entire city. Our density and relatively small size makes us a quite walk-able place but only to a certain extent. As I mentioned above, our sidewalks are of variable condition. Prioritizing cars has made the main streets veritable freeways during rush hour- free-flowing and loud at some points, slow as molasses at others. The people of my neighborhood deserve better.

In summary, I ask that these motions be either revised or thrown out entirely. Motion #16-0395 is short-sighted in only prioritizing car drivers with a 2/3rds money allocation for road repairs. Motion #16-0187 is disingenuous and lacks specificity in prioritizing the most vulnerable users of the road in the San Fernando Valley. Please consider these opinions in your voting.

Pictured below are images of the stretch of Haskell earlier mentioned as well as Woodman Avenue between Roscoe Boulevard and Branford Street at the border of Panorama City and Arleta (the stretch lacks sidewalks and protected bike lanes despite there being enough room for them in an unused, no parking lane).

Haskell Avenue



Woodman Avenue

