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CF# 16-0395 = Utilize Measure M Local Return to #MakeLACity streets safer for all Angelenos

1 message

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Subj: Use Measure M Local Return to #MakeLACity streets safer for all Angelenos! CF# 16-0395

Dear Honorable Councilmembers,

As the Director of Government & Public Affairs for the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, I strongly encourage the City to use Measure M Local Return dollars to prioritize active transportation, safety, and equity.

Let's invest in making our streets safer and more beautiful. Beautiful and safe streets calm us and lower our stress levels and add vibrancy and resilience to our neighborhoods by making us healthier. Healthy, safe streets provide the forum to optimize civic engagement and serve as the conduits to celebrate our cultural heritage.

Let's make our streets the living rooms of our communities. Let's make our streets the connective tissue of the city that embraces the wealth of diversity that we have in each of our distinct and beloved neighborhoods. After all, every street in Los Angeles is someone's front yard!

The City of L.A. will receive about \$50 million dollars annually from Measure M local return. I support using local return funds on projects that create safer, more livable streets so that we achieve Vision Zero and ensure that the visionary Mobility Plan 2035 becomes a reality - with a focus on equity that does not leave our most vulnerable residents behind. In deciding how to use Measure M local return funds, the City should consider the following priorities:

1. **Dedicate More Funding to Vision Zero** - The City should set aside the majority of its local return to support its Vision Zero work. People walking and biking are at a disproportionate risk of being killed from traffic violence, accounting for 49% of deaths, despite being in only 14% of crashes. Emphasizing active transportation will ensure that the most vulnerable road users are prioritized.
2. **Resume Commitment to Bike Lane Installation** - LACBC's 2015 Bike and Pedestrian Count found that bike lane installation decreased from 101 miles in 2013 to just 11 miles in 2015, and only 25% of high priority bike lanes identified in the Bicycle Plan had been installed since 2010. A portion of local return funds should be used to install the other 75% of high priority bike lanes. The City should also conduct annual manual bicycle and pedestrian counts and/or install automatic counters across the city to track the impact of bike lane installation.
3. **Prioritize Low-Income Communities and Communities of Color** - There is a historical and continual lack of investment in low-income communities and communities of color by government agencies who often leave these communities as afterthoughts of their planning practices. Local return dollars and Vision Zero are opportunities to prioritize low-income communities and communities of color that have been historically neglected by street safety projects.
4. **Commit to Data Transparency** - Data collection is essential to understanding traffic deaths, prioritizing intervention locations and resources, and holding public agencies accountable. The City must demonstrate its commitment to equity by collecting better data on race/ethnicity and income to allow for more robust health equity analysis and targeted interventions. Potential strategies include: enhancing existing data collection sources and practices, accessing relevant data from alternative sources, and conducting community needs assessments in the High Injury Network neighborhoods.
5. **Promote Meaningful Community Engagement** - Foster community dialogues with law enforcement to ensure that resident voices, especially those most disparately targeted by law enforcement (young men of color and transgender people of color) are used to shape Vision Zero's enforcement strategies, using prevention and restorative rather than criminalization approaches.

Please ensure that active transportation, safety, and equity are prioritized in spending Measure M local return dollars.

Very truly yours,

Will Wright, Hon. AIA|LA

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