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June 23, 2009

The Honorable City Council
c/o City Clerk
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012
Attention: Honorable Wendy Greuel, Chair
Transportation Committee

Date: 6/24/09
Submitted in Transportation Committee
Council File No: 07-3494
Item No.: 1
Deputy: _____

RE: 2009 BICYCLE PLAN OUTREACH (CF 07-3494)

Overview

This report is in response to the Transportation Committee's request for a briefing by the Department of City Planning and Department of Transportation (Departments) on the outreach plan for the 2009 Bicycle Plan Update. The Departments understand that public participation is paramount to good planning and value input from user groups and the public at large.

Background

As a kick off to the public participation process, four public workshops were held in February and March, 2008, in the San Fernando Valley, Westside, Central/South Los Angeles and Harbor area to introduce the Bicycle Plan and solicit comments from the public. Additionally, public presentations on the development of the new plan were made to four Neighborhood Councils, the USC's School of Policy, Planning and Development, the California Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Southern California Chapter of the Association for Commuter Transportation, and various other community groups and organizations who formulated a request to staff.

Also a project website was created (www.labikeplan.org) which contained an electronic survey form to provide a means of input regarding bike routes, policies and/or programs. In addition, a postcard was developed and distributed to libraries, bicycle shops, and other public locations to solicit input from individuals without Web access. In all, over one thousand surveys and comment cards have been received.

The original scope of work called for four workshops to be conducted after the release of the full draft plan that include both the maps and the plan text as well as a presentation to the Bicycle Advisory Committee. However, staff elected to release the Bicycle Plan's draft maps that identify current and proposed facilities upon their completion on May 29, 2009, to provide the public ample opportunity to review and comment, while staff continues to work on the plan text. Over 3,000 visits to the website were recorded between May 29 and June 8, 2009.

Paper copies of the maps were distributed to regional libraries, Council Offices, including field offices, and City Planning and Transportation offices. An electronic version of the map was posted on the bike plan website in low and high resolutions. A letter announcing the availability of the maps was e-mailed to all Neighborhood Councils (see attached) and to all participants of the first round of workshops. The letter was also mailed to participants who do not have e-mail. To date, over 100 e-mails and 27 comment cards have been received.

The draft plan is anticipated to be completed on July 27, 2009. On that date, Council offices, neighborhood councils, bicycle associations, media, and interested members of the public will be notified of the release of the complete draft plan (maps, policies, technical handbook, etc.) Additionally, the plan will be posted on the Department of City Planning and Department of Transportation websites.

Public workshops

As identified in the original RFP, four public workshops will be held throughout the City. The workshops will take place in the San Fernando Valley, Westside, Central/South LA and the Harbor area (similar to the first round of workshops). The workshops will be used to present the full Bicycle Plan document, explain the purpose and policies, and answer any questions, and solicit input from the public regarding the draft plan. Prior to the workshops, the full document will be released on the project website and an email notification will be sent to all neighborhood councils, bicycle organizations, media outlets, council offices, and other parties of interest. Hard copies of the documents will be available at City Planning offices in downtown and in Van Nuys. If allowed by budget, full documents will also be made available at the City's eight regional libraries.

The Department of City Planning will continue to accept comments from the public for two weeks after the end of workshops. This will allow for people who were not able to attend workshops to submit comments.

Bicycle Advisory Committee (B.A.C.)

The full Bicycle Advisory Committee meets every even month. Committee meetings are usually held in the odd months. The Departments of City Planning and Transportation plan on meeting with the B.A.C. upon the release of the full document, which is expected to be in the last week of July. The next meeting of the B.A.C. is currently scheduled for August. In the interim, the B.A.C. can hold a special meeting or a subcommittee meeting in July to hear an update from the Departments regarding the Bicycle Plan, but a comprehensive review of the document will likely have to occur at their August 2009 meeting. The Departments view these meetings as an excellent opportunity to hear from bicycle advocates.

Post workshops/Public Adoption Process

A. City Planning Commission

As required by the City Charter and Municipal Code, the City Planning Commission (CPC) must conduct a public hearing before considering a general plan amendment. To satisfy this requirement and provide for additional opportunities for public input, the CPC may hold more than one public hearing prior to formulating its recommendations. Formal public hearings may be conducted by the Director of Planning's Designee prior to the CPC's consideration of the Plan.

B. City Council:

Hearings before City Council committees also give the public an additional opportunity to comment on the Bicycle Plan. Given the nature of the project, it is anticipated that joint meetings of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee (PLUM) and the Transportation Committee will be held to consider the Bicycle Plan.

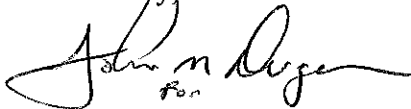
Conclusion

The Departments of City Planning and Transportation are committed to the development of a new Bicycle Plan and fully support the continued involvement of members of the public in general and the bicycling community in particular. The consultant team will facilitate the four workshops to elicit input and answer questions and we anticipate that they will attend the City Planning Commission, Council Committee hearings and the hearing before the full City Council. The Departments are dedicated to creating a plan that will put the City on a path to become one of the most bicycle-friendly cities in the country.

Recommendation

The Departments of City Planning and Transportation will provide periodic updates to the City Council regarding public participation and input.

Sincerely,



S. GAIL GOLDBERG, AICP
Planning Director
Department of City Planning



RITA ROBINSON
General Manager
Department of Transportation

Attachment: Map release letter

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May 28, 2009

CITY OF LOS ANGELES 2009 BICYCLE PLAN UPDATE DRAFT MAPS RELEASE

To all Interested Parties:

The City of Los Angeles is releasing the draft maps of the proposed bicycle facilities developed for the Los Angeles Bicycle Plan. This proposed network of bicycle facilities is a result of extensive fieldwork, public/community input—including public meetings, mail-in comment cards, the online comment page from the project's website and routes submitted via web-based mapping services—as well as a review of the network recommended in the 2002 Bicycle Plan.

At this time, these proposed bicycle facility maps are the only primary document available for public review and comment. The complete draft of the Bicycle Plan will contain other elements including a chapter describing proposed policies for bicycle plan implementation and administration, education and encouragement, enforcement, road and bikeway engineering, bicycle parking, bicycle-transit integration, maintenance and evaluation. Public workshops and public hearings will be held citywide, upon completion of the entire Draft Bicycle Plan to provide members of the public ample opportunity to comment and formally testify. Public comments and testimony will be addressed in the staff report transmitting the proposed bicycle plan to the City Planning Commission for its consideration and subsequently to the City Council and Committees for adoption.

Printed copies of the Draft Bicycle Plan Maps are available for public review at the locations listed below. At public libraries, please request copies for review from the Information Desk:

- City Hall, 200 North Spring Street Department of City Planning, Room 721
- Van Nuys Civic Center, Marvin Braude Constituent Service Center 6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Department of City Planning, Public Counter (Room 251), North Valley (Room 430) and South Valley (Room 351)
- Council Offices (upon request)
- Central Library, 630 W. 5th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90071
- Arroyo Seco Regional Branch Library, 6145 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles 90042
- Exposition Park - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional Branch, 3900 S. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90062
- Frances Howard Goldwyn Regional Branch Library, 1623 N. Ivar Avenue, Hollywood 90028

- Mid-Valley Regional Branch Library , 16244 Nordhoff Street, North Hills 91343
- North Hollywood Regional Branch Library, 5211 Tujunga Ave., North Hollywood 91601
- San Pedro Regional Branch Library, 931 South Gaffey Street, San Pedro 90731
- West Los Angeles Regional Branch Library, 11360 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 90025
- West Valley Regional Branch Library, 19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335

Electronic copies will be available for download as a pdf on the project website [www.labikeplan.org]. All comments received will be part of the public record and constitute an integral part of the public testimony made on the proposed plan's bicycle maps. Comments will be collected at the physical locations listed above. Comments may also be submitted through the project website, via e-mail or regular mail in the following manner:

1. through the project website [www.labikeplan.org];
2. via email [jordann.turner@lacity.org]; or
3. via paper mail to Jordann Turner, 200 N. Spring St. Rm. 721, Los Angeles, CA 90012.

A Note on the Maps

For the 2009 plan there are four types of bikeways identified in the maps—Bicycle Paths, Bicycle Lanes, Bicycle Routes, and Bicycle Friendly Streets. The maps also use a fifth designation, Proposed but Currently Infeasible (PCI), to identify roadways that are important in developing a more complete network, though currently infeasible due to the physical changes required to improve bicycling conditions.

The following section describes each of these five designations in detail.

I. Bicycle Paths

Bicycle Paths are paved pathways open only to bicyclists and other non-motorized users. Opportunities for bike paths are primarily located along flood control channels, service corridors, and rail-rights-of-way with a minimum number of intersections with driveways and/or roadways. Bicycle Paths may be considered the backbone of the greater bikeway network useful for longer transportation trips.

II. Bicycle Lanes

Bicycle Lanes are exclusive lanes on the roadway designed for bicyclists' use and are not wide enough for continuous automobile travel. They are generally installed by narrowing the existing automobile lanes to provide enough room for a bicycle lane.

III. Bicycle Routes

Bicycle Routes are recommended to create connections in the proposed bikeway network. These facilities are intended for roads where bicycle lanes are infeasible, but other efforts to make bicycling conditions safer are possible. Improvements may include the following:

- Additional warning signage,
- Restriping to provide wider outside lanes,
- Prioritized maintenance and resurfacing.

IV. Bicycle Friendly Streets

The proposed bikeways include an extensive network of bikeways on collector and local streets to provide an alternative to riding on boulevards with a high speeds and a lot of automobile traffic. Bicycle Friendly Streets are intended provide an environment where bicyclists and motorists share the roadway in an environment that is more conducive to bicycling. Differing levels of treatments may be applied, including signage, intersection improvements, and prioritization for bicycle traffic.

The following criteria were used to identify potential bicycle friendly streets:

- Length - In order to provide facilities that serve as a viable option to riding on large, fast moving boulevards, smaller streets were recommended that have minimal interruptions/breaks in their continuity. This is unavoidable in some cases, but the trade off for minor changes in direction is mitigated by providing a more comfortable environment for bicyclists of varied skill levels.

- Connectivity - Ideal streets are continuous over several miles and connect people with neighborhood amenities. These routes were identified based on their proximity/connection to the existing bikeway network, schools, community centers, recreation centers, parks, shopping/retail, employment hubs, and other desirable destinations.
- Crossing Improvements at Intersections with Major Roadways - Crossing major streets without traffic signals can be problematic for bicyclists. Fieldwork was conducted to identify streets that have existing traffic signals at intersections with major roadways, wherever possible. However, crossing improvements will be necessary at some collector-arterial intersections.
- Grade Separated Crossings - In some cases, grade separated crossings for bicyclists and pedestrians will be required to cross obstacles such as flood control channels, railroads, and freeways. These crossings are the most costly element of a collector network, but are required for the development of a continuous Bicycle Friendly Street.

The latter two considerations for Bicycle Friendly Streets are also denoted included on the map:

At-grade crossing improvements mark intersections that may need improvement to facilitate bicycle crossings. Some intersections may need signals, flashing beacons, crosswalks or median refuge islands to provide safer, more comfortable crossing conditions.

Grade-separated crossings improvements include tunnels and bridges; they are further categorized into existing and proposed. Existing bridges and tunnels may require various enhancements, such as widening, ramping or re-opening, in order to ideally accommodate bicyclists.

Proposed facilities represent crossing improvements where none currently exist.

V. Proposed but Currently Infeasible (PCI)

This category designates key corridors evaluated as part of this planning effort where bike lanes are desirable, but determined to be infeasible due to current roadway widths and traffic conditions. Along these corridors, the addition of bike lanes would require either roadway widening or removal of automobile travel/parking lanes. The PCI category is intended to allow the plan to flexibly accommodate for improvement opportunities which may arrive in the future, possibly from development adjacent to a road, or changes in traffic patterns and parking needs.

Sincerely,



Helene T. Bibas
City Planner



Jordann Turner
Bicycle Plan Project Manager