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Mobility Plan

Much has been said throughout "Mobility 2035" about the legal requirements that the The City of Los Angeles has to follow from California State Bill 743 and State Assembly Bill 1358. Both bills demand the City to reduce carbon emissions (citing the automobile as the top polluter) and offer alternative transportation needs to the populace of the City Los Angeles and surrounding communities outside of Los Angeles' jurisdiction. Currently, the State is changing CEQA language to encourage development of alternative transportation strategies to reduce carbon emissions from automobiles. The planners who developed the plan should be commended for presenting something, which hopefully will be a feasible attempt at providing reductions in carbon emissions.

However, as stated by the 2035 mobility plan, CEQA also requires that Vehicle Trip Hours not be increased, as this would be an "Undesirable Outcome." But as we see from the drop in Metro ridership in the last quarter, getting people to behave the way governments want them to behave is a difficult task. And the unintended consequences, which are outlined in the last part of the Mobility 2035 plan should be heeded and believed as a probable outcome.

Entertainment hubs

Donald Shoup, UCLA Urban design professor.in his 2001 "Cruising for Parking," estimated that in Westwood, cruising for a curbside parking space creates 950,000 excess VMT. It also increases Vehicle Trip hours. This provides for a positive increase in carbon emissions. In Entertainment Hubs, such as Westwood, and especially the Hollywood core, which veil you pass through to get the Cahuenga Pass, the reduction of parking being asked by the City in the more than 44 development projects will most probably create arise in VHT's and VMT. The Mobility Plan is to be commended in not losing sight of needed parking in Hollywood and supporting the maintenance of parking resources in Hollywood. The plan would as do well with considering an increase demand of street usage from tourists and locals who come to these areas for entertainment purposes. Currently, the plan uses SCAG population projections, but the millions of tourists who visit Los Angeles entertainment hubs and attractions should also figure into the projections. Without an input or calculation, emergency services throughout the areas might be compromised.

But more should be done. As the Mobility Plan itself states, with the reduction of speed, carbon emissions increase. However, many developments coming into Hollywood are being encouraged by City Planning to reduce parking. The plan states that it will encourage the continued use of TOD planning.

However, because of Hollywood's grid interface with the Cahuenga pass, the restriction of the hills upon movement (Franklin becomes a major east/west artery narrowing down to one lane each way between Cahuenga and Highland, thus further creating carbon emissions during any event or bowl season.) reduction of parking in planned development needs to be carefully considered as the cost could, and most probably will increase carbon emissions as the pass is called upon to carry an ever heavier load.

The recent development of Universal Studio's "Harry Potter" franchise, the Academy Award season, which shuts makes difficult access to the Cahuenga corridor, etc. need to be taken into consideration. The Cahuenga Corridor, and the 101 Freeway through it, need to be protected from overdevelopment as any friction of this vital passage will further create carbon emissions and have a ripple effect through the Los Angeles and San Fernando basins. The plan needs to point out that, although access is for everyone, The Cahuenga Pass is the major route for traveling from the valley to the financial core downtown, where many commuters work.

Traffic Officers

The Plan needs to look at the use of traffic officers helping in congested corridors during peak hours. When cars do not make it through through an intersection by the time a light turns red, they sit blocking traffic, keeping it from moving, and pumping more carbon emissions into the air. Traffic officers would alleviate this problem.

Hollywood, Los Angeles' geographic center and major thoroughfare

In Hollywood, three major Secondary Highways pass through the Hollywood Core: Vine, Highland and LaBrea. All three carry passengers in a car or bus up to and through the Cahuenga Pass, yet no Vehicle Enhanced Network exists to facilitate passage quickly from South of Sunset. One only has to look at the maps provided by the Mobility Plan to see the separation of the Northern Valley, to Central Los Angeles. The access across the divide is the 101 freeway and the 405 freeway (the 5 to the East skirts the City and is still problematic with the inclusion of Glendale, Burbank and other cities). Buildings, the Hollywood and Highland Complex, the Hollywood Bowl Season, along with the Ford theatre, all contribute to excessive bottle necking and long extension of cars and busses that do not move back down to Wilshire and Olympic during peak hours. Pumping more carbon emissions into the air. Originally built out as a neighborhood serving the movie studio and radio industry, Hollywood was nestled appropriately next to the hills and water. Now, its geographic positioning should carefully be considered as a contributor to carbon emissions, as well as the growth around the passes accesses to the North and South. Any undo buildup of friction on the flow will increase emissions. The Plan does not include a VEN South of Sunset, although a preponderance of vehicle miles and vehicle hours are affected by the congested approach to the Cahuenga Pass.

Smart Phone Data Aggregators

With the advent of the Smart Phone, and its resounding success, mapping services or "apps" provide detailed traffic analysis of Los Angeles and alternative routing during "sig alerts" and traffic congestion.

Many times, these alternate routes will show 'cut throughs' with estimated time savings. The smart phones get this information because users of the apps provide the companies their location. The locations are aggregated by the algorithms and the company returns the results to the Smart Phone, in real time, so drivers can make intelligent choices through arterial streets that will move them around the City. We have already seen the increase of an estimated 6000 cars on the weekends traveling up to see the Hollywood Sign through neighborhoods do to Google maps providing access routes. The unintended consequence of not doing so will allow rerouting of cars by these apps through areas and neighborhoods the plans wish to protect.

The Mobility 2035 needs to add technology into its scheme. Los Angeles has an interconnected network of travel lights, yet the system is not, as of this time, interconnected with any real time mapping companies.

Data, the Mobility 2035 Plan should also make sure that the SCAG projections are accurate as can be. Since the City lost millions of dollars with the overturn of the Hollywood Community Plan because it used inaccurate projects, and since the Gold Standard is the US Aensus, care should be taken to keep supplying data for correct usage of what is being put into place. Once again, by partnering with Smart Phone traffic app providers, (actually, since the State is mandating, the Plan should point out where it expects the State to help) this data can become readily available. With the 2020 Census approaching, the plan should incorporate the use and data and actively seek it out. True, the SCAG figures mentioned will be altered as well. The 2030 Census would not be usable for meeting goals by 2035.

Neighborhood Councils

The Mobility Plan does speak of education. In many occurrences, it is to the police, firefighters, or other such city organizations. Nowhere does the Mobility Plan mention using the Neighborhood Council system, as part of its public education process. Indeed, the Plan never mentions Neighborhood Councils although they are part of the City's Charter. Many of the NCs actively use social media to encourage public participation in government, community interest and better understand the needs of their community. The Mobility Plan should look the Neighborhood Councils in its implementation strategy as a means to understand if the Plan is working and where to tweak it when it is not.

Tiered payment for transportation and amenities in busses and rail.

There is an economic divide between the users and those who own a car. As much as I hate to say it, I know some people would prefer not to mix with people who are not of their culture, demographic, or the homeless. Before the Metro Rail lines were put in, Metro used a tiered system for non-stop busses to the Downtown Core. Commuter busses still do that as well. However, that has almost been removed from the Central area of Los Angeles. To get people on the rails, at each major end point, adequate parking needs to be provided. Not reduced. I have many anecdotal stories about people trying to find parking to take the Metro mid day, but there was none, which forced them to drive downtown or to their destination. These sociological drivers need to be looked at, if we really want to get people out of their cars.

Feedback to the State

Finally, the City of Los Angeles needs to have a feed back loop to the State, to tell it when the State's mandates are not working, and where and when they do work. The City needs to partner with the State, if carbon emissions are to be truly reduced, both financially and philosophically over whether some of the initiatives the State has mandated really are bearing fruit, or if it actually is exacerbating the carbon emission problem.

Respectfully submitted.

Brian Dyer