

PROPOSITION TO INSTALL
BIKEWAY LANES/TRAILS:

**Santa Monica Boulevard
Beverly Hills / Century City**

*By Los Angeles County
Bicycle Coalition (LACBC),*

LOCATION: Beverly Hills – Century City
TYPE: Class I and Class II Bike Lanes

March 15, 2009

[Introduction](#)

Overall, LA needs more Class II bike lanes and Class I trails. Many streets throughout the city can accommodate bicycle lanes, but not much has been done lately. Alas, streets were built primarily for cars – as a part of a massive attempt to create “Car Culture” – while neglecting mass transit, bicycling, and pedestrian conditions. As a result, LA has become a victim of its own invention – an attempt to build LA as a Car-only city has failed, as the city is now paralyzed with gridlocks, and our unaccomplished “City of Dreams” turned into one massive Traffic Nightmare. Now is the time to seriously invest in Bicycle infrastructure, as Bicycling is an environmentally clean, healthy, and fun transportation alternative, and in many cases – is much faster than driving!

[Overview of the Project](#)

One of LA’s priority bike projects should be – bike lanes on **Santa Monica Blvd in Beverly Hills**. Specifically, between West Hollywood (Doheny Dr.) and Century City no bikeway exist, whereas Class II lanes have already been created east of Doheny – to almost Sweetzer Ave.; as well as west of Century City – to Sepulveda Blvd. Extensive observation has indicated that Santa Monica Blvd is a very popular cycling corridor, and has become even more popular upon recent implementation of Century City / Westwood segment of Bike lanes. Obviously, a bikeway link needs to be created between the two existing bikeway segments, and to fill-in the missing gap.

Plenty of possibilities exist to install bikeway in the Beverly Hills portion of the Santa Monica Blvd, namely – sufficient (and unused!) land is available, which makes potential improvements very realistic. For instance, Santa Monica Blvd in the Beverly Hills, as well as in Century City, has several abandoned Right-Of-Ways’ (ROW) space, which the City has chosen to neglect for decades:

- Center-Median between Doheny and Beverly Blvd junction – a large, 55’-60’ wide lawn, with half-dead trees, brush, and ugly fence; this could be utilized as a Bicycle park, with benches, etc.;
- Median between Beverly Blvd junction and Civic Center Dr / Alpine – another large, 60-foot wide lawn, with ugly brush (facing north), and nothing on the other side; just wasted space, which could be easily utilized into a Class I bike trail or Class II bike lane;
- Between Wilshire Blvd and Moreno Dr – yet another large, 60’-wide (32 feet – left side, and 28 feet – right side) abandoned ROW, owned by Southern Pacific Transportation Company. This could also be utilized as a Class II Bike lane and even a Bus lane.

In addition, the northern part of the Santa Monica Blvd, throughout most of its length, has a huge, unused lawn (with a dirt path on the far northern end), which could be utilized, by cutting only a few feet, and it could provide a vital Bike link between W. Hollywood and Century City.

[Details of Project Implementation](#)

WESTBOUND

Segment 1, WEST HOLLYWOOD: Willey Lane — Doheny Dr.

The existing Class II bike lane abruptly ends at Willey Lane, about 150 yards short from Doheny Drive. If anything, the lane should have ended right at Doheny, not in the middle of nowhere! The right traffic lane between Willey Ln and Doheny Dr is 20’, plus 6’ parking, totaling 26’ (!) wide. By slightly narrowing the curb traffic lane from 20’ to 15’, bike lane can be easily continued further west, closer to Doheny – without sacrificing the sidewalk or the useless center-median.

But further west, closer to Doheny, both the sidewalk and the car lane narrows (both become 15' wide), thus – the only way to accommodate the Bike lane would be to trim the median between eastbound and westbound lanes.

NOTE: This median is unpopular and very unappealing; rarely, if ever, have any pedestrians been observed using the median. This is due to poor landscaping and unwelcoming environment; the median has no benches, tables, or water fountains; the palm trees also don't make the median pedestrian-friendly. Thus, cutting this useless median on its sides to allow more room for bike lanes would be a very wise option.

Segment 2, BEVERLY HILLS: Doheny Dr. — Beverly Blvd junction.

Just past Doheny, Santa Monica Blvd is very wide, i.e. 29 feet, which is plenty to accommodate class II Bike Lanes; but beyond Sierra Dr the boulevard narrows to 15' wide, thus some of the vast unused curb lawn needs to be sacrificed to place bike lanes beyond Sierra Dr. Further west the curb traffic lane narrows to only 10', which is too narrow even for some cars and buses. The wide (60-foot) lawn needs to be cut, to add more space to the curb traffic lane, and to allow placing class II Bike lane.

NOTE: There is an existing 9' wide dirt path, used by pedestrians and joggers; it runs from Doheny to Wilshire (with minor deviations), but it obviously cannot be used as a continuous bike path because of cross-streets throughout the way. Class II Bike lane would be the best option along Santa Monica Blvd.

NOTE 2: Streetlight poles present another issue. They are very close to the curb, meaning – all streetlights will need to be moved further away, with the lawn. The City apparently hasn't planned the street to accommodate potential future realignments, since poles are too close to the edge of the curb.

So, the most feasible option for Bike lane would be – upon “moving” the lawn, with the poles, to place the Class II lane at the curb. Otherwise, if moving the poles is impossible, then the Bike lane would have to go on the lawn itself, which would require proper signage (for bikes, pedestrians, and autos), including – safety measures for cyclists to deal with cross-streets.

Segment 3, BEVERLY HILLS: Beverly Blvd junction — N Beverly Drive / Library.

Just west of Beverly Blvd / Palm Dr., Santa Monica Blvd traffic curb lane starts at only 12' wide, until approx. Foothill Rd, where the curb lane widens back to 15'. Further west, the curb lane's width remains at 15', all the way to Wilshire Blvd. The lawn continues to be wide, from 36' to 60', in most locations approx. 60'. And the streetlight poles continue to be at the curb's edge, meaning – the poles will have to be moved further, with the lawn, to fit bike lanes.

Segment 4, BEVERLY HILLS: N Beverly Drive / Library — Wilshire Blvd.

Curb traffic lane continues to be 15' (as mentioned above). Meaning – too narrow to add a bike lane without sacrificing the traffic lane. Again – the curb will need to be cut, and the poles need to be moved. Dirt path (for pedestrians/cyclists) continues to be 9' wide.

Continuing further west, there is a Good Shepherd Catholic Church, near which the lawn is only 18' wide – including sidewalk; and sidewalk itself is only 5' wide. On this particular section, although tough, but it is possible to cut down the lawn, from 18' to 13' (to accommodate bike lane), which leaves us with: 5' wide Bike Lane, 8' wide Lawn, and 5' wide Sidewalk. The 8' wide lawn can perfectly fit the streetlight poles – which will, once again, have to be moved with the lawn.

Further west (past the Church), the lawn immediately widens to 61' wide – which has plenty of space to sacrifice – for bike lanes! And the traffic curb lane continues to be 15' (and left lane is 11').

Finally, on approach to Wilshire, the two traffic lanes split into three (with the two right lanes turning right onto Wilshire Blvd). So, to ensure safe continuation of the bike lane:

- **OPTION 1:** Merge the bike lane with the left traffic lane, and continue to Wilshire (a sign “Yield to Cyclists” should be installed for motorists, to add safety); or
- **OPTION 2:** Construct a bike bridge across Wilshire Blvd (the optimal choice).

Segment 5, CITY OF LA / CENTURY CITY: Wilshire Blvd — Avenue of the Stars.

Immediately past Wilshire, the curb traffic lane is very wide – 18’ to be exact, which can already accommodate Class II bike lanes, without narrowing the sidewalk; this will make the traffic lane 13’ wide + 5’ wide bike lane. Also, about 300 yards further west, a new Development project will take place across from Sonya Dakar Skin Clinic; at that location we also have ample space for placing bike lanes: current curb traffic lane is also 18’ wide, with 18’w sidewalk. The only thing (in addition to placing bike lanes) that needs enhancement is the sidewalk itself, as currently it looks quite ugly: just plain concrete, with unattractive pavement, so beautification and landscaping needs to take place. The third traffic lane (which is now curb lane, mostly used by buses) – can start further west, to accommodate bike lanes.

Across from Sonya Dakar Skin Clinic – there is an ugly fence, which only occupies extra space, and is of no use whatsoever, so this fence needs to be pushed (by a few yards) backwards, thus allowing the sidewalk to be “pushed” further away from the road, allowing Bike lanes to be added.

East of Century Park East, across from “City National Bank” sidewalk is 15’ wide. Please note: the sidewalk is rarely used by pedestrians – since the westbound Santa Monica Blvd, in Century City, has no pedestrian “points of interests” (no cafés, restaurants, etc.), thus reducing the width of the sidewalk to 10 feet will allow 5 feet bike lanes.

Just to the east of Century Park East – the sidewalk narrows to only 9’ wide (its narrowest point), and curb traffic lane is 13’ wide. Two options are suggested to allow bike lanes placement:

- **OPTION 1:** Push the sidewalk back, to allow bike lane space; or
- **OPTION 2:** Devote the entire 3rd traffic (curb) lane to a Bike lane + widened Sidewalk – this is perhaps the best option because this 3rd lane is rarely used, and the traffic is always light on this segment. This 3rd traffic lane can be kept further west, where the bike lane initiates. So, reducing 3 traffic lanes to only 2 traffic lanes (to allow bike lanes) will not impact the traffic whatsoever.

Further west, between Avenue of the Stars and Club View Dr. (where the existing bike lanes start), the sidewalk is 52 (!) feet wide. This is pure wasted space because, as mention above, only very few pedestrians use this sidewalk, thus – to allow Bike lanes, the sidewalk can definitely be narrowed (and there will still be plenty of sidewalk space available!) So, upon adding the bike lane the sidewalk will be 47’ wide, which is more than enough for pedestrian enjoyment.

EASTBOUND

Segment 1, CENTURY CITY: Avenue of the Stars — Moreno Dr

This is where the existing eastbound Class II Bike lane abruptly ends (did the City run out of paint?). At the bike lane’s end, the curb traffic lane is still 20’ wide, which is enough for the bike lane, which should have continued further east, at least to Avenue of the Stars.

After Avenue of the Stars, Santa Monica Blvd is 4-lane wide, including a 13’-width curb lane, and has a 22-foot median (used for bus stop at the busway). A couple of options are suggested to accommodate Bike lane on this segment:

- **OPTION 1:** Eliminate one (of the four) traffic lane and dedicate it to Class II bike lane and widened sidewalk;
- **OPTION 2:** Reduce the width of the center-median to 17 feet, to allow the extra 5 feet for Bike lane; consequently, all traffic lanes would have to be moved towards the median (to allow placement of bike lanes on the right side of the street); or
- **OPTION 3:** Construct the bridge from the current bike lane terminus, over the entire Avenue of the Stars / Century Park East area; this would be the **optimal solution**.

NOTE: Bus shelters need to be erected for the existing bus stops at the Busway – for both Avenue of the Stars stop and Century Park East stop.

At Century Park East intersection there are 6 lanes of traffic, including left/U-turn & right-turn lane, totaling 70 feet; and a 10'-wide center-median in the middle. Again, either the median should be reduced by half, which would allow room for bike lane (if the bridge is not constructed), or one of the traffic lanes should be given to a Bike lane and slightly increased sidewalk.

Segment 2, CITY OF LA: Moreno Dr — Wilshire Blvd

At S Moreno Dr, just beyond where Santa Monica Blvd splits into South and North Santa Monica Blvd, there is an abandoned ROW, owned by “Southern Pacific Transportation Company”; this ROW has been neglected, and unused, for decades! The width of ROW is 32' left side and 28' right side; it can even serve as dedicated Busway – in order for buses to avoid gridlocked Santa Monica Blvd on approach to Wilshire; as well as, of course, as a Bikeway, with those options:

- **OPTION 1:** Devote the ROW to a two-way Class I Bike Trail and a pedestrian trail (similar to the Orange line bikeway), with sidewalk, and landscaping;
- **OPTION 2:** Devote the ROW to a one-way (eastbound) Class I or Class II separated Bike Lane, with a wide sidewalk, and landscaping;
- **OPTION 3:** Devote the ROW to a one-way (eastbound) Class I or Class II separated Bike Lane, plus a dedicated Busway, and a wide sidewalk with landscaping;
- **OPTION 4:** Convert the ROW to a parkland environment – with sidewalk, benches, landscaping, etc.; and build the Class II bike lane to the left from the ROW – i.e. the Bike lane to be a part of the boulevard. The issue is: as the Santa Monica Blvd approaches Wilshire Blvd, the Bike Lane will need to deviate slightly to the left – since the curb lane is added as 3rd lane for right turns only, meaning – the bike lane would have to run to the left of the right-turn only lane.

NOTE: If the bike bridge is constructed (see Segment 1 Option 3), it would connect directly with the ROW, descending at the start of the ROW, at S Moreno Dr.

The ROW ends at Wilshire / Santa Monica Blvd intersection, directly at the Starbucks parking lot; so – in order to accommodate the proposed Class II or Class I bike lane, the parking lot will need to be pushed a little further south, to allow smooth transition of bike lane onto Santa Monica Blvd.

Segment 3, BEVERLY HILLS: Wilshire Blvd — N Beverly Dr. / Library

Immediately upon crossing Wilshire, Santa Monica Blvd has three lanes, the two (right-hand side) of which converge into one. The 3rd right lane could definitely be converted into a Bike lane. Further east, with only two lanes available, the right (curb) lane is 15' wide, left lane is 11' wide. Since the median – between South Santa Monica Blvd and North Santa Monica Blvd – is occupied by numerous parking lots, trimming this median (with parking lots) is practically impossible, thus – the only way to accommodate Bike lanes on this particular segment is – to cut the northbound lawn, as mentioned above, and move streetlight poles. If done properly, plenty of space will be available for: two car lanes in each direction, and a Class II Bike lane in each direction.

Segment 4, BEVERLY HILLS: N Beverly Dr. / Library — Beverly Blvd junction

Class II Bike lane will proceed as normal, but just beyond Civic Center Dr / Alpine there's another median with an abandoned ROW, which is 60 (!) feet wide. As the previous ROW, this median has been neglected for decades, and it is now time to utilize it. The existing ROW has useless grassed area, with unattractive, old bushes, and an ugly fence, which ruins the Beverly Hills charm. On the ROW's fence we read this info: United Site Services (800) 638-1233; also, the physical address of this ROW is 9315 Civic Center Dr., in Beverly Hills.

Several options are available to utilize this abandoned corridor:

- **OPTION 1:** Devote the ROW to a two-way Class I Bike Trail and a pedestrian trail (similar to the Orange line bikeway), with sidewalk, and landscaping;
- **OPTION 2:** Devote the ROW to a one-way (eastbound) Class I or Class II separated Bike Lane, with a wide sidewalk, and landscaping;
- **OPTION 3:** Devote the ROW to a one-way (eastbound) Class I or Class II separated Bike Lane, plus a dedicated Busway, and a wide sidewalk with landscaping;
- **OPTION 4:** Convert the ROW to a parkland environment – with sidewalk, benches, landscaping, etc.; and build the Class II bike lane to the left from the ROW – i.e. the Bike lane to be a part of the boulevard. The issue is: as the Santa Monica Blvd approaches Beverly Blvd, the Bike Lane will need to deviate slightly to the left – since the curb lane is added as 3rd lane for right turns only, meaning – the bike lane would have to run to the left of the right-turn only lane.

Segment 5, BEVERLY HILLS: Beverly Blvd junction — Doheny Dr

Just past Beverly Blvd, yet another (third!) abandoned ROW exists, albeit with more trees & greenery than the other two ROW's. This 3rd ROW can also accommodate Class I or Class II Bike Lanes with added park-like environment; but a bridge needs to be constructed to link the 2nd ROW bikeway with the 3rd ROW bikeway (see scheme attached), similar to the Alex Baum bridge in Griffith Park. This would be an ideal connection between the two ROW bikeways, because – not only will it be highly convenient for cyclists, but it will – more importantly – be the safest option for all – cyclists (for safe crossing above the dangerous Beverly Blvd intersection), pedestrians, and also – cars, trucks, and buses

Another reason why placing a regular Class II Bike Lane on the street (instead of using the ROW) is dangerous is because – once again, the two traffic lane later split into three, with the curb lane becoming the right-turn only lane (onto Beverly Blvd), requiring the Bike lane merging left, through fast-moving vehicles; this is quite dangerous! Clearly, a bridge can be the best solution.

So, currently this 3rd abandoned ROW between Beverly Blvd and Sierra Dr. is quite ugly, abandoned, and has half-dead trees, old dry bushes, and surrounded by ugly fence. That's a no-no for such a great place like Beverly Hills!

At this ROW, curb eastbound lane continues to be 15' wide, while the abandoned ROW is 60 feet wide! The question remains, why are those all three ROW's (especially being so wide!) remain abandoned, neglected, and unused, when they could be fully utilized and put into much-needed use, which would benefit everybody – cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists!

Moreover, this 3rd ROW could be a dream parkland, since this area of brushes & trees mixed with open space is so wide! Class I bike trail, with an added jogging trail, as well as benches, tables, and water fountains – all could be built at a very low cost; this would transform the appearance of Santa Monica Blvd entirely!

Finally, just before approaching Doheny, there is a completely unused 40'-wide center-median, separating the eastbound and the westbound traffic lanes; this median serves no purpose, instead – it forces eastbound traffic to deviate south before returning to the normal Santa Monica Blvd eastbound flow (this is where Santa Monica Blvd splits with Melrose Blvd; Melrose starts at this point). This median needs to be removed so the eastbound traffic wouldn't have to be deviated, but rather could continue in a straight path, and also – this would provide more space to accommodate Class II bike lanes, which would start immediately upon exiting the 3rd ROW bike trail.

Segment 6, WEST HOLLYWOOD: Doheny Dr – Almont Dr

Just past Doheny, the boulevard still doesn't have bike lanes, due to narrow traffic lanes: curb lane is 11' wide, while sidewalk is 12', narrowing to 8' a little further east, with walkable space being only 5' wide. As mentioned earlier, the center median (separating eastbound lanes from westbound) is as wide as 33 feet (with a 5 feet dirt path), and currently serves no purpose; also the City, when constructing, made a mistake by widening the median at Doheny, thus disallowing bike lanes between Doheny and Almont Dr. So, this useless center-median needs to be trimmed, by taking out 5', in order to build a Bike

lane. This is a wise solution, and would help to place Class II Bike Lanes between Doheny Dr and the existing Bike Lane just west of Almont Dr. Ideally, 8-10 feet could be trimmed from the center-median – to allow widening of the sidewalks, as well. But – even reducing the median by 5 feet will at least allow placing Bike lanes.

As already mentioned, the existing eastbound Class II Bike Lane starts in a strange place, not at an intersection, but “middle of nowhere”, whereas the perfect place to start the lane would be – Doheny! (where prior to Doheny, the bikeway would “dive out” from the 3rd ROW which would be converted into a mini-parkland).

Conclusion

Based on all information provided, we believe the following facilities should be implemented, considering such factors like Cost, Safety, Length of project, and Cycling Conditions and Convenience.

WESTBOUND:

- ✓ Class II Bike Lane, from the existing Bike lane terminus at Willey Lane, all the way to the start of the existing Bike lane at Club View Dr, in Century City;
- ✓ Bridge over Wilshire Blvd (could be a Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge)

EASTBOUND:

- ✓ Class II Bike Lane beginning in Century City, from the existing Bike lane terminus;
- ✓ Bridge over Avenue of the Stars, descending to:
- ✓ ROW #1 – create Class I or Class II lane;
- ✓ Street-level Class II Bike Lane from Wilshire to Beverly Hills;
- ✓ ROW #2 – create Class I or Class II lane;
- ✓ Bridge over Beverly Blvd junction/intersection;
- ✓ ROW #3 – create Class I or Class II lane;
- ✓ Street-level Class II Bike Lane at Doheny, connecting to the existing Bike Lane at Almont Dr.

Please take the above suggestion into your consideration, since, in our opinion, improvement of Santa Monica Boulevard would not only benefit thousands of LA’s bike riders by promoting safer conditions, but it will also reduce road congestion and air pollution. More importantly, implementing this entire bikeway project will ultimately help to fill-in the missing gap between the two existing bikeways, and will create a continuous Bicycle Corridor from Sepulveda Blvd in West LA – all the way to Kings Rd in West Hollywood! This would be a major improvement for our city! And finally, building a bicycle path (“bike promenade”) in the three ROW’s will create a good recreation area for joggers, roller-skaters and bike riders, and give the City of Beverly Hills a new wonderful, revitalized look!

I strongly believe that LADOT, along with MTA, and other agencies, will realize the importance of bicycle-friendly conditions in Los Angeles and County, especially given the current high gas prices, and limited options for commuting in our car-obsessed city. It’s time to invest in other options, besides cars & roads, since bicycling (along with mass transit) benefits our health, our air quality, and our mobility. Successfully completing this project presented will help to boost our Bicycle Network, and will help the City of Angels to reach yet another milestone, for the benefit of all!