

# Better Bike Beverly Hills

www.betterbikebeverlyhills.org

November 6, 2010

Vice Chairperson Jeff Levine  
Members of the Transportation and Parking Commission  
455 North Rexford Dr. Room 290  
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Vice-Chair Levine and Commissioners:

**Better Bike Beverly Hills** member Ellen Lutwak and I appeared before the Commission this past Thursday to hear an update from the newly-formed Ad Hoc Bicycle Committee. We are encouraged by the appointment of three Commissioners to this committee - a first for our city – because it affirms that we must encourage non-auto alternatives for personal transportation if we are to move beyond the congestion and frustration endemic to mobility on the Westside. We at **Better Bike Beverly Hills** want to be a part of the effort.

Why the push for a better bicycle master plan? Cycling holds the potential to mitigate congestion and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That is acknowledged by regional planning organizations and transportation agencies; officials there see cycling as the most cost-effective way to meet federal and state environmental policy objectives and we agree! As cycling advocates like to say, *We are the transportation solution.*

**Better Bike Beverly Hills** anticipates a future that is both safer for cyclists and less-congested for those who choose to drive. Our members would like to work with the Ad Hoc Committee to move our city forward.

To that end, I'd like to reaffirm several comments that I made this past Thursday to the Commission and share them more broadly with the City Council too. Where the Ad Hoc Bicycle Planning Committee's work is concerned:

- Legitimacy is a must. Public involvement in the re-drafting of our bike master plan must include substantive participation by the cycling community. Pro forma participation (e.g., consultation) would lack the legitimacy necessary to find wide support from the cycling community. We anticipate co-creating a solid new bicycle plan and we want to be part of that effort.
- Credibility is key. Cyclists who commute to/from and through our city are knowledgeable about current conditions. We have seat-of-pants knowledge of pavement hazards, for example, and we know the anxiety of unwillingly ceding blacktop to aggressive motorists. We can suggest infrastructure

investments and safety programming that will make our streets safer and more inviting. Our participation is key to crafting a credible plan that will gain favor not only with cyclists in Beverly Hills, but also with transportation advocates beyond.

- Communication is crucial. We urge the Commission to move beyond the ad hoc designation and appoint a standing committee tasked with bike planning. If the ad hoc committee will continue to take the effort forward, though, make its meetings open to the cycling community. A transparent working process demands public meetings. Inform the cycling community of the agenda and make relevant documents (and meeting minutes or recordings) available.

**Better Bike Beverly Hills** is the only organization established to specifically represent the interests of city stakeholders. Reach out to our membership, which includes longtime residents, professionals, and even representatives from Team Beverly Hills. We have resident expertise in urban planning, safety instruction, public policy, and the law, and feel well-prepared to support the city in its efforts to craft a more effective bike plan. Find us online: [www.betterbikebeverlyhills.org](http://www.betterbikebeverlyhills.org).

**Better Bike Beverly Hills** is prepared to liaison with the Ad Hoc Bicycle Planning Committee and the Transportation and Parking Commission to support necessary (and overdue) upgrades to roads infrastructure, traffic signage, and safety improvements. Call on us to help you make cycling productive and enjoyable. We will look forward to working with the Commission and the Ad Hoc Bicycle Planning Committee members to ensure that all options are on the table for a better bicycle plan that will benefit everyone in Beverly Hills – pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike.

A bicycle planning process that is undertaken without the substantive participation of cyclists, however, will be ineffective by design – and will be a non-starter with the cycling community and **Better Bike Beverly Hills** members who will be unable to support it.

Sincerely,

Mark Elliot