



## WESTSIDE CITIES

• BEVERLY HILLS  
• CULVER CITY  
• LOS ANGELES  
• SANTA MONICA  
• WEST HOLLYWOOD  
• COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

**DATE:** MAY 19, 2011

**TO:** THE WESTSIDE CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD

**FROM:** MARIA RYCHLICKI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR &  
COG STAFF AD HOC BICYCLE COORDINATION PLAN COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT:** DEVELOPMENT OF PROPOSED COG WESTSIDE BICYCLE  
COORDINATION PLAN

### **INTRODUCTION:**

An ad hoc staff committee, composed of staff from both the Transportation and Sustainability Committees, with support of both Committees, has been meeting on a staff level, and meeting with bicycle stakeholders from the COG's member jurisdictions, to develop a proposed COG Westside Bicycle Coordination Plan. A preliminary roadmap of the conceptual plan will be presented to the Board for review.

### **BACKGROUND:**

COG jurisdictions have each been working independently on bicycle planning. However, prior to February of this year, very limited coordination on a sub-regional level had been taking place (an example is the cities of Santa Monica and West Hollywood, with Burbank, submitted a joint application for bicycle training). In February, an ad hoc staff committee began meeting to discuss the potential for development of a COG sub-region bicycle coordination program.

After review of programs currently existing in each COG member jurisdiction, and discussion of successful programs in other communities, it was recommended that the COG focus on issues that benefit most from regional consistency and coordination:

- recommended prioritization of linkages of bicycle paths/lanes and other infrastructure across jurisdictional boundaries
- bicycle safety awareness/education, with education being the core focus for this sub-regional work program
- emphasis on developing consistent education for all road users regarding their rights and responsibilities.

Following additional research and meetings with bicycle stakeholders, it is recommended that the effort be a proposed Westside Bicycle Coordination Plan, rather than a Master Plan, building upon and coordinating the strengths of the member jurisdictions' efforts.

The Bicycle Coordination program as proposed would build upon existing programs, such as bicycle transit centers, or developing programs, such as bicycle training "campuses" (as in Santa Monica,) and build awareness of them so that they may serve as joint regional resources. It is proposed that the COG member jurisdictions could develop shared messaging, such as "Complete Streets," serving pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and drivers of cars, trucks and other motorized vehicles and transit riders.

The development of more consistent (shared) signage, including signage to assist cyclists in navigating the various intra-regional connections (known as “way finding”) may also be an important component of the plan.

A key “deliverable” of the plan would be a sub-regional informational map showing existing bicycle infrastructure across jurisdictional boundaries. In addition, a map of planned facilities, and recommended connections of infrastructure gaps and closure of infrastructure “black holes”, is being prepared to coordinate regional planning. Eventually, these maps will also point out places of interest (such as libraries, etc.). The ad hoc committee is fortunate to be working with a team of students from Cal Poly Pomona on the preliminary map. The map is a class project for the students. Progress on this mapping will be provided to the Board at the May meeting.

A second key “deliverable” of the plan would be a COG policy statement of mutual support for member jurisdictions’ bicycle planning efforts which would assist in receiving regional cooperation “points” in grant applications.

Meetings with stakeholders have highlighted many recommendations, and insights, including:

- consistency of training and other education practices, on all levels;
- consistent design standards, including signage and pavement markings;
- consideration of requirements for State participation and implementation (such as Department of Motor Vehicle training);
- cyclist-friendly permitting requirements for construction sites and truck routes; and
- shared policies which include, to the extent possible, riding on sidewalks and use guidelines for recreational trails which are also bicycle paths.

A goal of the proposed plan would be to assist in implementing consistencies through shared/joint programming. The Committee is still in the fact-finding stages and the scope of the proposed program is evolving. Staff has developed a preliminary list of concepts to present to the Board for consideration to facilitate the plan’s development. Based on Board input, staff will continue to refine the plan roadmap and provide an update at the July 21, 2011 Board meeting.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

It is important to emphasize that staff has worked with a very aggressive schedule of meetings (including evening meetings with stakeholders) and research due to the ad hoc committee’s commitment to bring the framework of a plan forward for Board consideration at this meeting.

The implementation a plan could take as many as three to five years, depending on its approved scope. A final plan would be advisory, as the COG is a joint powers agency that, in the public interest, conducts studies and projects designed to improve and coordinate common governmental responsibilities and services. The public interest requires that the COG not possess the authority to compel any of its members to conduct any activities or implement any plans or strategies that they do not wish to undertake. There is no implementation funding designated for the plan and members’ staff time, and funding needed to complete the plan, at this time would be at members’ discretion. There is limited funding within the COG’s treasury that the Board may allocate toward the implementation of the approved plan, if it is recommended that such funding is needed.

**PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL GUIDELINES:**

The committee respectfully requests COG Board consideration of the following proposed concepts:

The COG supports:

- Improving bicycle infrastructure by identifying and prioritizing closure of gaps and “black holes.” Both inter and intra- regional. (Identify North/South opportunities)
- Coordinated gap closure programs implemented by member jurisdictions
- Coordinated messaging of rules of the road targeting ALL road users of rights of cyclists, pedestrians, automobile drivers – and responsibilities of users; and coordinating these rights/responsibilities in city practices and protocols, (e.g., construction permits),
- Coordinated education programs for public, city and agency staff,
- Coordinated training programs (work with school districts, Police Departments),
- Identification of “best practice” examples tailored to Westside needs, (amenities/training),
- Basing a safety awareness program on existing resources (such as resources available from the Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Health) and existing bicycle plans of member jurisdictions, thus avoiding “re-inventing the wheel”,
- Consideration of development of a regional cyclist “count” when funding is available, (this would be a strong foundation for grant applications),
- As appropriate, development of unified policies with respect to cycling on sidewalks,
- Unified signage/markings, including “way finding” signage,
- Advocate for improved California Vehicle Code (CVC) definitions and regulations

Potential Deliverables - Please note that some of these deliverables could be developed in a relatively short time-period, some would take years to complete and others would be ongoing.

- Map identifying existing and planned regional bikeways and recommended connections of infrastructure.
- Update to the COG’s mobility study
- Development of a way-finding plan to navigate facility gaps
- Bicycle Safety Awareness materials
- Policy supporting each jurisdictions’ grant applications/possible joint grants
- Education/awareness programs
- Coordinated bicycle training programs
- Coordination/leveraging of existing programs
- Increase safety and number of cyclists

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff respectfully requests feedback from the COG Board members with respect to the proposed COG Westside Bicycle Coordination Plan.