

1st Metro Bicycle Roundtable Notes

Friday, February 19, 2010, 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Metro Presentations:

Doug Failing, Executive Director of Metro's Highway Program and Interim Chief Planning Officer, welcomed participants and emphasized that his platform will be "road friendly" towards bicycling. He stated that the purpose of the 1st Metro Bicycle Roundtable is to create a dialogue between Metro and the cycling community. Metro Staff will be listening today. The Bicycle Roundtable will be held on a Quarterly basis.

Lynne Goldsmith, Bike Planning Manager, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the Metro Bike Planning Program, current program and new initiatives.

Bronwen Trice, Sr. Community Relations Officer, Regional Communication opened the dialogue with a description of the four flip charts: one for ideas related to Metro Bus Operations, one for ideas related to Metro Rail Operations, one for ideas related to Metro Bike Policy and Programming, and one for ideas that LA County cities and unincorporated areas are responsible for implementing. She also reviewed the ground rules.

Public Comment:

Approximately 70 people attended the Roundtable. Noted below are commentary provided by the participants:

- More bicycle and vehicle trip counts should be initiated. The National Pedestrian Database provides methodologies for counting bicyclists.
- The Orange Line has spaces for transporting three bicycles on its bike racks. All Metro buses should be fitted with three racks.
- One or two more seats should be taken out of bus rail cars from the opposite ends. Turnstiles should be widened for easier access for bikes, wheelchairs, baby carriages, and rolling business/traveling luggage.
- Call for Projects – Projects in the TDM category should reduce vehicle trips. More funding should be allocated for bicycling and pedestrians. Prop C funding should be used for bike, ped and TDM projects.
- Bus Drivers have a negative connotation regarding bicycling; trains and buses need more capacity for bicycles; bus operators need to be trained;

- Metrolink needs to run regularly in both directions, especially on the weekends so that bicycles can use the system to travel farther distances. Weekends are very important for cyclists.
- Metro had backed off the SR2 Freeway [Glendale Blvd project] but Metro should remain on that project. Complete Streets Projects; 405 widening project needs freeway on and off ramps that are more bike friendly ramps near UCLA; a bikeway to Santa Monica on the Expo Line is essential. Consider establishing a Bicycle Advisory Committee for each Metro Corridor Project.
- Potholes should be repaired especially at Metro Bus Stops and along the bus routes in general, and Metro should provide funding. The signage on the Red Line is good; however, cyclists who go to the middle of the rail car, should be directed toward the two ends. Out of courtesy, people should be advised to move when a cyclist is entering or exiting the rail car. The time restrictions should be eliminated and the County/Metro/L. A. City Bike Plan/LACBC should all review each other's plans in March 2010.
- There are 10,000 bicyclists in Los Angeles; however, they are not attending the Metro Bicycle Roundtable. Metro has the capacity to reach millions of people and promote bicycling. A 20-mile commute could be an additional alternative, to be included with the 1-mile and 5-mile commute.
- Metro could add a car for bicycles on the train.
- There should be a Call for Projects for Bikeways. "Right of way" should become a focal point. The Expo Line Bikeway should have free bike parking.
- There should not be eminent domain for the proposed Expo North Trail project. Concerns were noted about bike path maintenance, lighting, privacy, graffiti and why an EIR has not been done for this area. Two to four meetings should be held on the Westside.
- In the Call for Projects, Metro should switch back to using Proposition C to fund Bike Projects. Bike paths are cheaper than arterial projects. There should be bonus points for bikes/peds. At the moment, the system does not provide points for bikes/peds. These projects should be considered as a deterrent to greenhouse gas emissions. Motorized projects should be exempt from bonus points. Metro should advocate more in Sacramento and D.C. and have more lobbyists supporting bicycling.
- The Call for Projects gives fewer points for bicyclists than for cars.
- The rail line needs to have some lock down/strap to hold onto for bicyclists.

- There needs to be more collaboration between non-profits and Metro to share bikeway spatial data.
- The Green Architects from Sweden admired the success on trains for bicyclists in Los Angeles. There should be 8 riders per car; bike rules need to be clear; bicyclists need to be able to hold on securely.
- More bicycle surveys are needed as well as a biannual bike count, utilize Twitter, and more data collection from districts in Los Angeles and Beverly Hills.
- There should be more Call for Projects funding, Complete Streets, greater points for sustainable transportation; less focus on infrastructure more focus on programs and marketing funds; more emphasis on “I want to ride a bike” and less emphasis on “the commute”.
- More lighting is needed on the Orange Line Bike Paths; it is scary at night in particular around the Balboa Area. In general, the Orange Line is very well used and maintained. Larger bike stations are needed, as well as a gutter for bicycle wheels [stair channel] along the stairs and wider turnstiles.
- There should be no free [car] parking; Complete Streets needs to be emphasized. The structure supports expensive, big bike paths, but smaller, inexpensive bike lane projects should get more focus. It is difficult to use Federal Funds for projects. There should be three bikes per rack on the Metro Buses, and more capacity inside the bus. Metro’s Public Art Program could be used as a model on how to develop the Bike Program. Metro should look at the programs implemented in Long Beach to solve many problems. Rail could be modified by lowering the floor. There should be a parking “cash out”. Metro could influence and reward cities. Bicyclists should be on equal footing and receive rewards from the various cities in Los Angeles County.
- Los Angeles is a flat city and has an ideal climate for riding and commuting. Bike Lanes should be used during peak hours for commuting. Bike Lanes should be wider and bicycles must share the lane with vehicles. Future Roundtable Meetings could be conducted via conference calls, webinars as this would create a lower carbon footprint.
- There should be on-demand bicycle lockers; bus terminals should be listed as bicycle terminals. There should be Metro bike racks *inside* the Red Line Station. Metro Marketing is world class and should promote rail synonymously with bicycles.
- Would like to see wayfinding stations on maps and more bikeway facilities.
- Bicycles on sidewalks are dangerous.

- Electronic shared lockers should be looked into.
- Focus on bikes/peds and Complete Streets; wants to emphasize the effect on the community with this focus. Wants to see bikes inside the buses, if the buses are not crowded and the bike rack is full.
- A Bike Program was hosted by Long Beach. The City Council has an agenda that includes the bicycle culture and they were able to raise funds to build an infrastructure for bicycling. Wants a greater focus on the relationship between motorists and bicyclists. Metro has been responsive to the Long Beach agenda.
- Biking and walking for the health of the community is important. The County Public Health Department should partner with Metro and bicyclists.
- A cultural shift is occurring in Los Angeles. Bicycle laws are important. Metro can use ads to promote the “Share the Road Campaign”. Triple racks should be on buses. Metro’s Long Range Plan and the L. A. Bike Plan should be integrated with the disabled.
- There should be a bike connection between L. A. City Parks, such as: Chinatown, Griffith Park, Dodger Stadium, whereby the trails could be constructed along fire lanes [roads]. Riding from Metro stop to Metro stop would be ideal.
- There should be a better plan for bike routes, mapping out roads. LACBC will put out a map showing the difficult streets to cross. A crossing light would be better for pedestrians and bicyclists. There should be a light changing button to stop bicyclists from running red lights.
- The City of Santa Monica has many uses for their streets. Encourage Metro to fund experimental ideas and learn from Long Beach.
- Cars are traveling 19 miles per hour and bicyclists are becoming much more visible in Los Angeles. There needs to be a much more proactive approach to creating the city. The Mayor of Bogotá, Columbia promotes cycling every Sunday; and since the introduction of cycling, there as been a noticeable drop in kidnapping. “The bicycle is your friend!”
- The future Metro Light Rail Projects bikeways need to be built with no gaps.
- Cyclists should not be segregated from projects. They should be able to ride on the main road. Riders should be able to go from “destination to destination”. Homeowners don’t like cyclists in their neighborhoods, so bicyclists should ride as a vehicle with the main traffic.

Summary Closing:

Bronwen Trice, reiterated the major issues raised by participants:

- Increase the capacity for bikes on buses and rail, Improve bike policy on the rail;
- Increase safety awareness for the bus operators and bikes;
- Increase safety on the streets in Los Angeles County through the use of signage, lanes and crossing lights;
- Increase Metro Call for Projects funding to implement bikeways and programming smaller projects;
- Increase education and awareness with a “Share the road Campaign”;
- Put information on the website;
- Hold more community meetings/outreach/utilize Metro’s Creative Department, increase outreach campaign/advertising;
- Increase bicycle counts and data collection for cities and on rail/buses;
- Increase Metro’s level of Complete Streets planning for projects ;
- Increase bicycle lockers/parking;
- Look at model bike programs in cities within Los Angeles County;
- Support a more integrated system of bicycle routes throughout the city;
- Increase local funding for the Call for Projects;
- Lobby DC & Sacramento (not just for funding, but for the LRTP);
- Improve parking pricing policy.

Participants suggested the following regarding the frequency of future Roundtables:

- Meetings should be held more frequently in the beginning.
- Metro could establish a social networking website like Seattle has.
- There should be more meetings in more locations.
- There should be a follow-up Roundtable meeting before Bike to Work Week.

Participants suggested the following regarding the format of future Roundtables:

- There could be Web Ex Conference calls during lunchtime.
- Feedback could be communicated online via the website.
- Metro could establish a Bike Working Group.
- There could be breakout sessions to help Metro staff develop planning policies.

Doug Failing closed the Roundtable.

Attachments:

- Agenda
- List of Attendees