

WESTWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
WESTWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
COMSTOCK HILLS HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
HOLMBY WESTWOOD PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
WESTWOOD HILLS PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION
WESTWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
WEST LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Planning and Programming Committee

Committee member Hilda Solis, Chair
Committee member Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker, Vice Chair
Committee member Mike Bonin
Committee member Janice Hahn
Committee member Ara Najarian
Committee member John Bulinski

Email: jacksonm@metro.net

**Re: Purple Line Extension - First mile/last mile
Westwood Boulevard, from Wellworth to LeConte
Gayley Ave., from Wilshire to LeConte**

May 12, 2020

Dear Chair Solis and fellow Committee members,

The bicycle lane proposed for Westwood Boulevard from Wilshire Blvd. to LeConte as well as Gayley from Wilshire to LeConte is opposed by every council, homeowner association and Chamber of Commerce representing the many thousands of individuals who live, work, and study in, and enjoy the Westwood community.

In fact, this community has repeatedly opposed installation of any bicycle facility that would impede emergency vehicle access to the UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital Level 1 trauma by reducing roadway capacity on either Westwood Blvd. or Gayley Ave., which provides direct access to the hospital and is the hospital FEIR-designated route to the Emergency Entrance.

Opposition to Westwood Blvd. bike lane: We have expressed our position at Metro information meetings and to our councilmember, Paul Koretz. The Mobility Plan 2035, an element of the General Plan of Los Angeles and adopted by the City Council on September 7, 2016, "Project Description" states: "One important change to Westwood Boulevard was made in response to the multiple transportation demands on Westwood Boulevard, now and in the future, with the opening of Exposition Phase II. The MP 2035 now proposes to include Westwood Blvd. on the Transit Enhanced Network (TEN) while retaining existing portions on the Bicycle Enhanced Network (BEN) (north of Santa Monica Blvd. to LeConte Avenue). The TEN designation on Westwood Blvd. is proposed as a moderate enhancement which would not remove a vehicle travel lane. Remaining portions of Westwood Blvd. (*south of Wilshire*) would retain their existing bicycle lanes."

We have studied and re-studied the facts, have traversed the route, and have always come to the same conclusion: the bicycle route belongs on another street, possibly routed on Weyburn Place or Glendon and Tiverton Avenues.

The groups have examined how these streets are used and by whom – bus riders, ambulances, fire trucks, campus shuttles, ride shares, bicycles, equipment and cargo trucks, short term parking, pedestrians – and their necessary configurations—left and right turn pockets, bus, truck, and ride share loading zones and more—and have concluded that major capacity reduction would cause major and widespread difficulties. Some of the elements that would change with a bike lane include: removal of 3 travel lanes, removal of desperately needed parking spaces, removal of several turn pockets, and arrow eliminations. These elements are not supported.

There are (pre-COVID-19) approximately 30,000 vehicle trips during rush hours and 940 bus trips between Wilshire and LeConte during the hours of 6:30 am to 8:30 pm, weekdays. Bicycle trips account for only 1% of all trips on Westwood Blvd. Uber and Lyft trips have increased on campus from 38,000 in 2018 to 50,000 in 2019, PER WEEK. Gayley Ave. has greater than 20,000 vehicle trips during rush hours and frequent buses and shuttles, especially between Lindbrook and Wilshire.

Buses running on Westwood Blvd. and in Westwood Village include LADOT, Metro (761), Santa Monica Blue Bus (Routes 1, 2, 3M, 8, 12, Rapid 12), Culver City Green Bus (6 and Rapid 6), UCLA Bruin Bus, Santa Clarita (792 and 797), Antelope Valley Transit Authority (786), LADOT Commuter Express (431 and 534), and the UCLA/Westwood Long Beach Transit Commuter Express.

Councilmember Koretz sent a letter to My LA, Dept. of City Planning on May 13, 2014 which stated: "I made clear that I oppose the use of Westwood Blvd. for bike lanes and I am disappointed that the Westwood Blvd. option reappears in this document and that the northern segment in the Westwood Village area has been raised as an option of year 2 in the implementation of the Citywide Bicycle Plan. I am requesting that this BEN be removed as part of this document and as part of an earlier approved citywide plan." **As a result of the councilman's position, Westwood Blvd. for bike lanes was removed.**

History of the Metro presentation and community involvement: There was minimal community engagement by Metro staff until the community insisted that more engagement be completed. The handout by Metro included photos with little traffic on Wilshire Blvd. instead of bumper to bumper daily traffic patterns, interviews with 21 stakeholders that excluded homeowner associations, councils, and business groups, no traffic studies, and captions stating "High Traffic Speeds." There is nowhere on Wilshire Blvd., Westwood Blvd., or any nearby street that has high traffic speeds! The handout states "Traffic Calming" as an "idea." With a daily population of 80,000 on the UCLA campus, any traffic calming would increase greenhouse gas emission and travel time for every traveler. There appeared to be no criteria for defining the routes nor how such criteria was arrived at.

This current COVID-19 pandemic will bring some changes down the road and consideration should be given to the possibility that people no longer want to ride in crowded subways or buses. Since 2012, transit commuting declined by 75,000 and commuters driving alone to work has increased by 770,000 daily in the metropolitan (greater LA.) area. "Indeed, the Los Angeles Metro system carried approximately 120 million fewer riders in 2019 than in 1985, even including transfers, despite subsequently opening a huge rail system, with six lines radiating from downtown." Quoted from Op Ed, 4/26/20, LAT by Joel Kotkin

Based upon the Mobility Plan, 2035 (an element of the General Plan) and continued

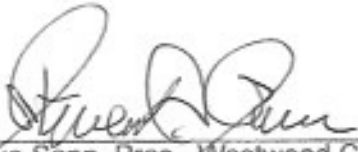
strong opposition from multiple Westwood organizations, we request the removal of Westwood Boulevard from Wilshire to LeConte from the First/Last Mile Planning process and further oppose installation of the bike lanes on Gayley Ave. from Wilshire to LeConte in that process.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



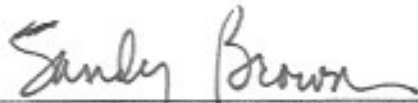
Lisa Chapman, Pres., Westwood Neighborhood Council



Steve Sann, Pres., Westwood Community Council



Jan Reichman, Pres., Comstock Hills Homeowners Association



Sandy Brown, Pres., Holmby Westwood Property Owners Association



Stephen Rohde, Pres., Westwood Hills Property Owners Association



Stephen Resnick, Pres., Westwood Homeowners Association



Roozbeh Farahanipour, Pres., West Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce