

Local Travel Network Vision March 2019

Strategy for reducing traffic congestion and criteria pollutants affecting South Bay residents; and, for reducing the GHG emissions that drive climate change.

In December 2018, the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) received a sustainable transportation planning grant from Caltrans to plan a “Local Travel Network.” This grant will allow the SBCCOG to build on Metro’s conceptual master plan entitled [“Slow Speed Network Strategic Plan for the South Bay” \(Civic Projects, September, 2018\)](#) with the specificity to qualify for implementation funding in 2020. This “Vision” summarizes the project for the public, potential consultants and other interested parties.

The South Bay Local Travel Network (LTN) is a strategic response to several dynamic factors affecting the sub-region:

- Increasing congestion
- Invasion of dockless e-scooters which has divided communities for and against
- Invasion by whatever comes next in the increasingly fragmented mobility marketplace
- Need to provide safe infrastructure to accommodate these new mobility devices
- Need to accelerate the transition to EVs in order to combat climate turbulence VS their high costs making them unattainable for all but the most affluent communities

The South Bay Local Travel Network (LTN) will address all of those factors. It will consist of a system of low speed streets designated to include shared use by zero emission local use vehicles (LUVs) – modes that are specialized for short range (up to 25 miles) and slow speeds (not faster than 25MPH), and that can be electric drive or human powered.

LUVs include neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs), e-scooters, e-skateboards, e-bikes, Segways, hover boards and the entire class of human powered devices (1,2,3 and 4 wheel cycles, push scooters, roller skates, etc.). All of these options are priced at the lower end of the mobility market. Evolution in the LUV space, also known as “micro-mobility” is expected to continue for years to come.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN ACTION

The SBCCOG's extensive Research and Demonstration program (R&D) discovered that 70% of South Bay household trips average 3 miles or less, and 90% average 10 miles or less. Those distances are well within the range of the LUVs. The long-term vision for the LTN is that it will be used for a substantial portion of the 90% of trips that are local.

There are approximately 600,000 private vehicles in the South Bay, about 275,000 are the second or third car in a household. The long-term vision is that with the LTN most of those additional cars will be some type of LUV. That will dramatically decrease for many the portion of the household budget spent on transportation.

While the current approach to micro-mobility services is dockless and rent-by-the-minute, other arrangements are likely as the space expands into other devices. At some level of usage it is more economic to purchase an e-scooter or e-bike. NEVs will be privately owned. Devices on a subscription basis (similar to owning) are coming.

The South Bay LTN will be defined by designated routes that provide access to centers of employment, education, health care, retail malls, and other commercial destinations. The goal is for all neighborhoods to have direct access to the network, especially senior communities, disadvantaged communities and places that are locked in by fast speed arterials.

The variety of devices at the scale expected will require that the LTN include parking arrangements. For example, dockless will not scale-up well. Just as freeway speed cars have parking lots, so will LUVs have corrals or docks wherever destinations are clustered.

At those parking locations, Level 1 charging will also be in demand. The combination of parking and charging may provide an opportunity for public-private partnerships with rental companies and a source of revenue from accommodating those devices that are owned or controlled by subscription.

Signage and other wayfinding devices and media from maps to smart phone apps, with a more or less uniform design will be required.

Finally, rules for using the South Bay LTN, including for the parking and charging components, will be required.

Planning for the LTN will not only prepare for what's coming next but, more importantly, will help shape what society needs to happen next – and that is rapid absorption of affordable EVs that meet the needs of 90% of the household trips taken.