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**SOUTH BAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARD PASSES
RESOLUTION SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED STREET
NETWORK FOR SLOW-SPEED VEHICLES**

**Study Finds 70% of South Bay Car Trips are 3 miles or less,
with \$1.5 Billion Spent Annually on Gas**

TORRANCE, CALIF., May 28, 2021 – While COVID-19 has prompted many to rethink their former commutes, a study released by the South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) may also precipitate a new mindset about their modes of transportation. The study found that travel in the South Bay is dominated by short trips—specifically 70% are 3 miles or less; 88% are 10 miles or less. Meanwhile, annually the region’s residents are collectively paying more than \$1.5 billion annually for gasoline and \$9,000 individually on automobile expenses. Last night, the SBCCOG Board of Directors passed a resolution at its monthly meeting supporting implementation of the network.

The [SBCCOG’s Route Refinement Study for a South Bay Local Travel Network](#) proposes using existing streets to create a new network, where the implementation of low-cost infrastructure and street treatments would support the growing personal micromobility market of lightweight, zero-emission vehicles, which operate at speeds below 25 mph. Such slow-speed vehicles include neighborhood electric vehicles (NEVs), which appear similar to golf carts, e-scooters, e-bikes, onewheels (electric skateboards) and other personal devices.

The study proposes development of a 243-mile route—overlaid onto the South Bay’s 2,000 miles of existing streets—dedicated to micro-devices. The selected network of slow-speed roads (25 mph), named “The Local Travel Network” (LTN), would be constructed as a “sharrow system” of markings on the street with wayfinding signage to inform riders and drivers they are using the LTN. Signage would alert motorists to be aware of slow-moving, lightweight vehicles in the vicinity, making it safer for all travelers.

“The traditional gas-fueled passenger car designed to be an all-purpose, go anywhere vehicle, really is an outdated mode of transport for those who have short work commutes, or make frequent trips to their children’s school or the corner grocery store,” said Wally Siembab, SBCCOG research director, who conducted the study. “The average car weighs more than 4,000 pounds and carries mostly empty space—on average 1.67 people—which is both inefficient and unsustainable. With 750,000 registered motor vehicles on our South Bay roads, the time is ripe to ‘right-size’ our vehicles for local trips.”

Adoption of the study’s recommendation offers a timely strategy for cities seeking ways to meet Governor Gavin Newsom’s 2020 executive order that commits the state to 100% clean electricity by 2030, while simultaneously planning for an expected influx of new residents as it aims to meet an ambitious target of building 3.5 million new homes by 2025.



The study highlights the following additional eye-opening statistics:

- 64% of total trips originating in the South Bay terminate in the South Bay, averaging seven minutes each trip in travel time, according to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) South Bay Matrix, 2015
- Only 9% of trips originating in the South Bay terminate outside of the 25-mile radius
- 28% of car trips are a mile or less, nationally
- Autos are parked 95% of the time

The study cites the following potential benefits of the proposed LTN:

- Allowing restaurants and retailers to use parking areas without losing capacity (small vehicles require less space)
- Providing residents and overnight visitors a special uncongested path around the South Bay
- Scaling back of congestion on the major arterials
- Reducing transportation expenses (gas, car payments, maintenance) for residents to help offset COVID-19 losses of income
- Improving street safety due to the reduction of average speeds
- Increasing the appeal to employers in the area, attracted to a “green economy”

Using Metro’s 2017 “Slow-Speed Network Strategic Plan,” as a conceptual starting point and funding source, the SBCCOG’s scope of work was to design and then refine a sub-regional network of safe, slow-speed streets into a near-ready planning guide for South Bay cities to implement. The project methodology was data driven, using GIS coded datasets, city policy preferences and field testing. Network design choices for the qualities and characteristics of streets were critically reviewed and tested for safety, usability, proximity and/or integration into the existing street infrastructure, including bicycle networks. The route segments that evolved as the final proposed LTN reflect multiple iterations of data gathering, map-making and stakeholder feedback.

The SBCCOG’s service territory includes 15 cities and areas of Los Angeles City Council District 15, along the Harbor Freeway corridor into San Pedro and the Port of Los Angeles. In the initial phase of the project, street and route refinements were slated only for the beach and inland cities, excluding communities located on the Peninsula and San Pedro due to their hilly terrain which presented challenges for sustaining vehicle battery power. However, COVID-19 became a catalyst to the growing market of e-bicycles and the development of batteries with greater range and capacity to navigate hilly topography, so the geographic range of the study was expanded to include these communities. In July of 2020, [e-bike sales](#) jumped 918% in Manhattan Beach and more than 800% in Hermosa Beach, compared to the same period in 2019. Globally the market grew 54% during that same period.

Successful implementation of the LTN would coincide with the availability of safe and secure parking and charging facilities in residential communities and commercial districts.

The next phase of the project includes community outreach and education events to gauge interest, as well as further development of city-specific implementation plans using Measure M funding.

The SBCCOG is inviting members of the community to express their views on how the LTN might impact them personally through a survey, which follows a detailed, full-color story GIS map that illustrates how the network would work. By visiting <https://bit.ly/LocalTravelNetwork>, visitors can also look up their own neighborhood to see if the destinations they frequently visit would be included in the network.

ABOUT SOUTH BAY CITIES COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

The South Bay Cities Council of Governments (SBCCOG) is a joint powers government agency of 16 cities and the County of Los Angeles which share the goal of maximizing the quality of life and productivity of the subregion. Within this structure, cities and Los Angeles County maintain the qualities and characteristics that make them unique and independent, while also coming together collectively to address issues of common interest for a greater good of the communities through partnership, persuasion, performance and advocacy. For more information about the SBCCOG visit <http://southbaycities.org>