

(BR)Transit Neighborhood Plan: Wilshire/Crenshaw

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I. BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) was awarded federal funding to install peak hour bus-only lanes along Wilshire Boulevard, a key east/west corridor for the City. Our proposed Wilshire/Crenshaw Transit Neighborhood Plan, centered on the rapid bus stops located at the intersection of Wilshire and Crenshaw, would harness Metro's initial investment in the Wilshire Bus Rapid Transit project to deliver enhanced impacts that would further state and local development and environmental goals while delivering place-making improvements to the neighborhood.

WILSHIRE BRT

- 7.7 miles of peak hour curbside bus lanes.
- Phase 2 opened on April 8, 2015.
- Excludes Beverly Hills, parts of Westwood, and Santa Monica.
- \$31.5 million improvements to Metro Rapid 720 expected to result in 24% travel time reduction and 10% mode shift.
- Scope of work includes: Restriping of traffic lanes, upgrading transit signal priority system, selective street widening, curb lane resurfacing, installation of signage and pavement parking.

PLAN AREA MAPS



II. EXISTING CONDITIONS

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 12,351 residents within 1/2 mile of Wilshire/Crenshaw (neighboring Koreatown has 23,500 per 1/2 mile)
- \$47,050 median income (20% of residents earn more than \$100k/yr)
- 39 years old is median resident age
- 53% Asian (11.3% citywide), 26% White (52% citywide), 5% Black (9% citywide), 22% Hispanic (48.4% citywide)
- 45% of residents have a Bachelor's Degree (31% Citywide)
- 65% drive alone, 11% Carpool, 13% take Transit to work

EXISTING PLANS

Historic Preservation Overlay Zones: Windsor Square, Windsor Village, Wilshire Park

- Preservation of buildings and facades
- Must comply with design guidelines
- Facade and visible area - maintain architectural integrity for lots that are visible from the street or other public areas

Park Mile Specific Plan

- Preservation of low-density residential character
- Prohibits restaurants, retail

Wilshire Community Plan

- Preserve character of neighborhoods while providing more housing
- Reduce vehicle trips and congestion by linking housing to commercial centers and transit

"Nobody's destination is Crenshaw/Wilshire."

- public comment, 3/17/10 community meeting

BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Unwelcoming streetwall, high vacancy rates, Metro construction staging wall, inadequate pedestrian infrastructure, poor quality streetscaping

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS



IV. PROPOSAL: (BR)TRANSIT NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Policy 1: Provide active, engaging public places

Program 1.1 Create active, flexible public plaza on portion of the Metro-owned parcel at the Southwest Corner of the intersection, that includes regular programming, such as:

- Cultural events and public performances in partnership with neighboring organizations, such as the Wilshire Ebell Theater and future art museum at the Masonic Temple
- Regular farmers market and food truck programming

Policy 2: Enhance pedestrian experience and improve multi-modal transit connections

Program 2.1 Upgrade design and user experience of rapid bus stops, including improving real-time information screens, seating, and overall aesthetics

Program 2.2 Create wayfinding signage with information on local landmarks, including the Getty House, Larchmont Village and Wilshire Ebell Theater

Program 2.3 Install a crosswalk on the Western side of the Wilshire/Crenshaw intersection; upgrade all crosswalks to continental or decorative

Program 2.4 Install a landscaped median just West of the Wilshire/Crenshaw intersection

Program 2.5 Upgrade streetscape on Wilshire between Lorraine and Bronson, and Crenshaw between Wilshire and 8th Street, landscaping parkways and adding street trees

Program 2.6 Provide low-interest loans to property owners along Crenshaw between Wilshire and 8th Street to improve street-adjacent property, remove gates, and upgrade driveways

Program 2.7 As an interim solution, commission a mural from a local artist that celebrates the surrounding neighborhood and its history, architecture, for the construction staging wall currently surrounding the Metro property at the Southwest corner of the intersection

Program 2.8 Perform a road diet on Crenshaw between Wilshire and 8th Street to widen sidewalks to 11' and add 4' bike lanes, by removing one travel lane in each direction

- Bike lane will extend South on Crenshaw based on city's plans
- Add a bus bulb-out on the West side of Crenshaw at Wilshire to accommodate the rapid bus stop

Policy 3: Increase the mix of uses, including activating ground-floor retail opportunities

Program 3.1 Extend the adaptive reuse zone to Wilshire and Crenshaw along Wilshire Boulevard

Program 3.2 Incentivize retrofits of existing ground-floor retail and restaurant space and inclusion of retail and restaurant space in new developments by providing grants and permit streamlining for property owners

- Include at least one amenity that is included in the Wilshire Community Plan: library, community center, police substation, senior center or child care center

Program 3.3 Change the current CR Limited Commercial Zone on Wilshire between Lorraine and Bronson to a C1 Commercial Zone to allow for restaurant and retail uses

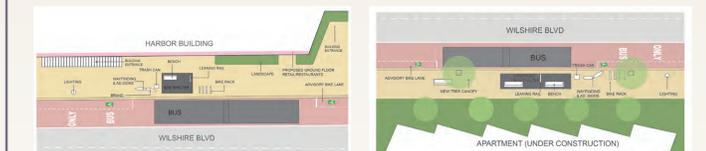
GROUND FLOOR, HARBOR BUILDING



PUBLIC PLAZA, METRO-OWNED PARCEL



BUS STOP UPGRADES



WILSHIRE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS



III. VISION AND GOALS

VISION: Create active street frontages, open space, and an enhanced BRT transit center - for socializing, place-making and improving multi-modal connections at Wilshire and Crenshaw.

GOAL #1:

Create a neighborhood destination at Wilshire and Crenshaw through place-making improvements that create ground-floor retail space, enhance the street life and provide better public spaces.

GOAL #2:

Increase the utilization of transit, biking and walking by improving the user experience in each of these modes.

GOAL #3:

Reduce the number of car trips, vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions by providing improved alternative transportation options in conjunction with land use strategies.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

POLICY ALIGNMENT

- Wilshire Community Plan: more housing, mixed-use, neighborhood commercial, transit use
- Park Mile Specific Plan: "park-like setting"
- LADOT: a transportation system that "supports our economy by connecting places and creating public spaces"
- SB 375/SCS: VMT/GHG reduction AND place-making

CHALLENGES

Community group opposition: "No support from any uses other than those allowed by the Park Mile Specific Plan"; "NO retail, NO Restaurants"; "Public park plan is rejected." (from letters sent April 12 & 13, 2015)

OPPORTUNITIES

- Provide examples: Mission Meridian Village in South Pasadena, Larchmont Village
- Find local supporters: middle income, younger age, non-white population (\$47,050 median income, 39-year-old median age, 53% Asian, 22% Hispanic)
- Focus on mobility benefits for aging population, such as providing alternatives to driving and bringing retail and services closer to housing. Community is interested in elderly mobility issues (Gerg Wittmann, Board member of the Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council).
- Gain legitimacy to revise the Park Mile Specific Plan: Wilshire and Crenshaw are 'Primary Transit Priority' arterial streets in new LA General Plan Mobility Element.
- LA District 4 City Council Election: Political transition could provide opportunity for new discussion and plan.

BENEFITS

INTERVENTION	POSITIVE IMPACT	SOURCES
Public space, streetscape/ped improvements, more retail	Increase retail sales, improve sense of community, quality of life	Handy & Clifton, 2001; Ryan & Frank, 2009; NYCDOT, 2013
Encourage biking/walking through infrastructure upgrades	Health, safety, increased land values, increased transit ridership	2014 CARB Reports; Ryan & Frank, 2009
Increase mix of land uses	Reduce GHG/VMT	2014 CARB Reports
Adaptive reuse, parks, zone change	Reduce vacancy, empty lots, and increase land value	Cervero & Kang, 2011; Munoz-Raskin, 2010