FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LACBC STATEMENT ON TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE’S VOTE TO REMOVE BIKES LANES ON WESTWOOD AND CENTRAL FROM MOBILITY PLAN 2035

Los Angeles, Calif. –

Earlier today, on Wednesday, May 11th, members of the City of Los Angeles Transportation Committee voted in favor of removing bike lanes on Central Avenue and Westwood Blvd included in the groundbreaking Mobility Plan 2035. Councilmembers Paul Koretz, Jose Huizar, and David Ryu voted for the removal, while Councilmember Mike Bonin continued to champion the need to keep the Mobility Plan network intact.

Mobility Plan 2035 is intended to change how Los Angeles designs its streets to better meet the needs of all users. Mobility Plan 2035 makes safety the City’s #1 transportation priority and aims to improve access, options, and reliability for all modes of transportation. In addition to 300 miles of protected bike lanes, the plan features over 200 miles of bus transit improvements, strategic pedestrian enhancements, and a more reliable grid for drivers to create an integrated transportation network across Los Angeles.

Recently, Mobility Plan 2035 was honored with the Transportation Planning Award of Excellence by the Los Angeles Chapter of the American Planning Association, as a plan that gives Angelenos improved options with a comprehensive network for people biking, walking, using transit, and driving to get around. The removal of Central Avenue and Westwood Blvd, corridors with high numbers of people biking, demonstrates a lack of commitment to study them, to engage the community in dialogue about the future of these streets, and to build a complete transportation network that works for everyone.

The Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition is thankful for Councilmember Mike Bonin’s visionary support for keeping the plan intact for all Angelenos. However, we are disappointed that some of the other members present today seem to lack an understanding of how important citywide connectivity continues to be for all users of Los Angeles roads. At today’s hearing, Councilmember Bonin stressed, “The integrity of [Mobility Plan 2035] is sacrosanct,” pointing to the importance of maintaining networks within the plan.

“Mobility Plan 2035 was designed to give Angelenos real options to get around,” said Tamika Butler, Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition, “and the removal of Central Ave and Westwood Blvd leaves people that use these streets—people trying to get to work, students trying to get to school, families trying to get to the park—with fewer options. During years of community outreach, residents asked for more options, and it is disappointing that their input was ignored. We simply cannot continue to ignore the dangers of moving around this City for people who bike and walk. Mobility Plan 2035 was a vision document that addressed these concerns, and to see its integrity compromised by these removals is disappointing and continues to put lives at risk.”

Now that the amendments to remove bike lanes on Westwood and Central have passed the Transportation Committee, the full City Council will vote on them this Friday at 10 a.m. at Los Angeles City Hall. From there, the City Planning Commission will have a chance to discuss and approve or reject the amendments.
Councilmember Huizar stressed the importance of more analysis and discussion of this analysis at the City Planning Commission. LACBC supports this in-depth dialogue and wants all Angelenos to be a part of that process to show the City Council how much Mobility Plan 2035 means to their ability to safely travel throughout the City. This will be the last chance to halt the Council from taking Westwood Blvd and Central Ave out of the Mobility Plan. The Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition and our partners will mobilize to show all 15 council members that there is support for Mobility Plan 2035 with all networks intact.

Founded in 1998, the Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition is a membership-based, volunteer-driven nonprofit organization that works to make all communities in Los Angeles County into healthy, safe and fun places to ride a bike. Through advocacy, education, and outreach, LACBC brings together the diverse bicycling community in a united mission to improve the bicycling environment and quality of life for the entire region.

For more information, go to http://www.la-bike.org.

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