FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dana Variano
213-629-2142 x116
dana@la-bike.org

LACBC CALLS ON OFFICIALS TO ACT FOR SAFER STREETS:
54-YEAR-OLD WOMAN ON BICYCLE KILLED IN HIT-AND-RUN CRASH

LOS ANGELES - Yesterday morning, Elisa Gomez was hit by a delivery truck southeast of downtown Los Angeles, and left to die in the middle of the street. The 54-year-old bicyclist was riding Eastbound on Washington Avenue at around 8:30 in the morning and was struck from behind by a FedEx delivery truck, which then sped away. This tragedy is indicative of the grim realities faced by bicyclists and pedestrians on our county’s streets.

Los Angeles County is known as the “hit-and-run capital of the nation” with 50% of all traffic crashes categorized as “hit-and-run.” The national average is 11%. In 2015, over 28,000 hit-and-run crashes were reported across the county. That averages out to one hit-and-run crash every 18 minutes in Los Angeles County, a number that glaringly shows the risks faced by those walking or biking in our county.

“Making streets safer for all road users has to be a priority for the City of Los Angeles,” stated LACBC Executive Director Erik Jansen. “Simple steps can be taken to calm traffic and make drivers more aware of vulnerable road users, like people walking and biking. We know how it do it - other cities have shown immense progress building infrastructure to decrease speeds, make turns safer, and build a city at a human scale. Angelenos deserve safe streets and they deserve elected officials willing to show real leadership to make it happen.”

Elisa was killed a block away from the Washington Blue Line Metro station southeast of Downtown Los Angeles. In 2017, LACBC partnered with other community organizations and Metro to conduct community engagement along the Blue Line to assess the safety and access needs for people walking and biking to stations. LACBC chose to focus on Washington Station, an area surrounded by the High Injury Network, to work to prevent
tragedies such as these. Currently, Metro is using the data collected through this process to apply for funding to make infrastructure improvements identified by the community.

The widely-accepted belief that people dying on our streets is inevitable is a false one. These tragedies are wholly preventable, and that’s why we call them “crashes” and not “accidents.” LACBC calls upon our city and elected officials to be leaders for safe streets and commit to adequately funding and implementing initiatives like Vision Zero. Without their leadership, Elisa Gomez will not be the last bicyclist who will be killed on Los Angeles streets.

About LACBC

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, visit www.la-bike.org.

###