

November 5, 2021

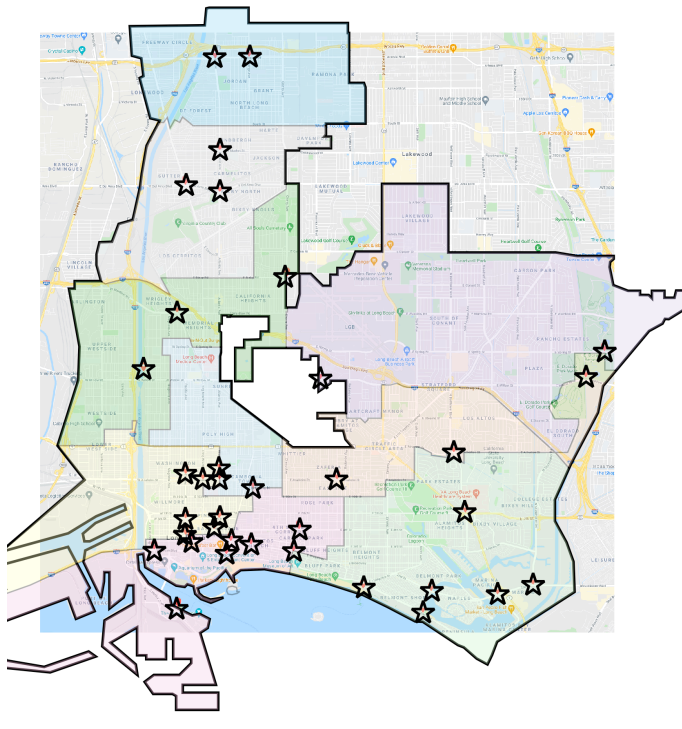
Dear Public Safety Committee:

On October 8th of this year the City of Long Beach put out a call for “volunteers for the the 14th Annual Bicycle and Pedestrian Count.” The stated intent is to help “collect data to determine future infrastructure and safety campaigns.” Here is the link <http://bit.ly/2021bikecount>

Here is where I found out about it:

<https://twitter.com/LongBeachCity/status/1446561538438008840?s=20>

By counting existing usage of bike and pedestrian infrastructure —largely built in privileged areas— to determine the areas of greater need, you exacerbate existing inequities. Simply take a look at the bike path map of west Long Beach compared to other areas.



Also, take a look at the survey locations, not one bike count location in West Long Beach. CD7 increased density more than others in the census and has 1 location in front of the Wardlow metro station, 1 on the LA River, used mostly for sport — and will skew the count— and 1 on the periphery by the airport.

From experience —I’ve lived and bicycled in the same neighborhood for nearly 50 years— the current CD7 is also the district where most people use bicycles as their sole means of transportation (self included). I ask you to look at the city's bicycle route map and tell me how many bike routes you see in the westside.

Some suggestions:

- 1) Build pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in areas of greatest density, regardless of existing usage. Build it and it'll be used. Abandon old planning/zoning models and focus on walkability by allowing and promoting neighborhood commercial in residential neighborhoods.
- 2) Remember equity? Focus on low-income areas where mass transit & bicycle are essential transportation. Tourism & sport is not. It is incredibly disingenuous and disconnected from reality to think that a survey which does not include the westside will in any way reflect anything

other than the forgone conclusion that more bike paths are needed in areas that already have more bike paths.

3) Walkability also means the ability of disabled people and seniors to reach basic services. Our accessibility infrastructure is shameful, fix it. In my neighborhood, Mr. Uranga's neighborhood, we have sidewalks that are completely unusable for people on wheelchairs or walkers. We have steps and slopes in the middle of the sidewalk that are tripping hazards even for able-bodied people.

4) Focus primarily on educating drivers instead of bicyclists and pedestrians. It is well documented that the auto industry was primarily responsible for the creation of laws that basically made it a crime to be a pedestrian, shifting responsibility for safety on the natural person not the intrusive vehicle. It is also well documented that bicyclists (League of American Wheelmen) pushed for paved roads, so in fact we do own the road. Yet drivers honk at us, throw things at us from moving vehicles, spit on us, or drive perilously close to us when we are exercising our right (California Vehicle Code) to occupy an entire lane.

5) Lastly Free and efficient mass transit encourages ridership, not the other way around. Scooters are fun... until they block pedestrians and people with disabilities. Implement heavy fees and fines *on the scooter companies* to force scooter companies to behave responsibly.

Sincerely,

Carlos Ovalle