

NATURAL RESOURCES Sept-Oct 2020 Monthly Report

by Grace Peng for LWV/LAC & LWVBC

A personal take. Recommendations are not necessarily official League policy. ;-)

This will be a transportation-based issue because the transportation sector is the largest source of air and water pollution and greenhouse gases (GHG) in the region.

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES

In October, I attended multiple meetings:

10/7 - SCAG Sustainable Communities Program, CA Active Transportation Program (ATP)

Funding Opportunities info session for governments and community groups.

I saw SBCCOG employee, Aaron Baum & Torrance Transit's Daniel Lim on the Zoom

10/6 - RB City Council about bike lanes, ADU rules, RHNA allocations, NRB parking reform

Current NRB commercial zoning requires so much parking that the old buildings cannot be remodeled w/o providing 2-3x the current parking. The only buildings that have been remodeled since the current regs have been turned into drive-throughs

(Taco Bell, Chick-fil-A, Starbucks, Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, Carl's Jr)

I wrote a letter of support for protected bike lanes along Aviation and Artesia, including statistics on traffic violence. I sent a copy to the Easy Reader and an abbreviated version will be published in the Nov 12 edition.

10/15 UCLA Luskin Ctr on a History of 100 years of LA Traffic

LA is first in the world to consider Corridor Pricing, where people will pay to travel through (and pollute along) corridors. The \$ will be spent in reparations to offset the harms inflicted on the communities in the corridors. Professor Wachs says that this is a form of reparations to marginalized communities.

This supports LWVC policy goals and is recommended by many academics.

10/15 CA Water Board meeting

Many good talks including a session on the Water-Energy Nexus.

I'm writing up an article about the Water-Energy Nexus for the next LWVC newsletter.

10/20 RBCC on homeless temporary housing in mini houses by Pallet Shelters

<https://www.palletshelter.com/where-we-work>

RB agreed to host them for 6 months in North Redondo Beach at the Kingsdale site.

Originally, the council members talked about rotating the shelter sites around the city. But, when it came time to make concrete plans, the South RB council members and Mayor Bill Brand said that SRB will never play host to a homeless shelter.

I have seen this NIMBY play everywhere; the meeting lasted until 1:45 with back and forth. NRB (the more integrated and mixed income part of RB where I live) will host the homeless shelter for 6-7 months, and will re host after a rotation to SRB for 6-7 months. But, since SRB says that will never happen, LAC may not want to invest time and effort in this homeless project.

RB city staff will reach out to Manhattan Beach and Hermosa Beach to request that they host in rotation, but no one expects them to agree.

ARTICLE FOR VOTER

Imagine the struggles of low-wage workers in the Beach Cities. Parking near the beach restaurants is expensive and scarce. Car insurance and parking in the zip codes where they can afford to rent a room (or part of a room) are also expensive and scarce.

Many ride transit or bicycles to work, and then struggle to get home in the dark with unreliable or nonexistent transit and dangerous roads. On September 18, October 2, and October 8, 2020, two cyclists were killed and one gravely injured by reckless motorists while riding home on Rosecrans Boulevard.

Road violence kills as many people in the US as guns, and these are largely preventable deaths with better policies and streets engineered to prioritize safety. While many US cities claim to support [Vision Zero](#), reducing traffic deaths and severe injuries to zero, none have made the changes necessary to make it a reality. Nordic countries have succeeded. Wealthy Asian countries have made great strides. The Beach Cities and LA County as a whole has failed. Consider the 2010-2019 statistics:

City	Fatal	Severe Injury	Other Visible Injury	Complaint of Pain	Total
Redondo Beach	12	41	270	268	591
Hermosa Beach	0	14	94	53	161
Manhattan Beach	2	12	102	86	202
El Segundo	3	14	91	52	160
Lawndale	1	30	106	133	270
Hawthorne	21	73	287	435	816
Inglewood	20	73	228	315	636
Torrance	29	37	313	435	814
Gardena	17	38	186	232	473
Santa Monica	25	139	1,116	769	2,049
LAC	2,639	8,964	40,626	42,007	94,236

While Santa Monica has more collisions per capita, active transportation has a larger mode share. A lower percentage of the collisions in Santa Monica are fatal. Higher motorist speeds and larger/taller vehicles contribute to higher death rates.

City	Total	2019 Population	Fatal Per 1,000	Fatal+Severe Per 1,000	Total Collisions Per 1,000	% Fatal Collisions
Redondo Beach	591	66,748	0.1798	0.7940	8.8542	2.03%
Hermosa Beach	161	19,506	0.0000	0.7177	8.2539	0.00%
Manhattan Beach	202	35,135	0.0569	0.3985	5.7493	0.99%
El Segundo	160	16,654	0.1801	1.0208	9.6073	1.88%
Lawndale	270	32,879	0.0304	0.9429	8.2119	0.37%
Hawthorne	816	87,071	0.2412	1.0796	9.3717	2.57%
Inglewood	636	108,151	0.1849	0.8599	5.8807	3.14%
Torrance	814	145,438	0.1994	0.4538	5.5969	3.56%
Gardena	473	60,892	0.2792	0.9032	7.7679	3.59%
Santa Monica	2,049	92,480	0.2703	1.7734	22.1561	1.22%
LAC	94,236	10,184,378	0.2591	1.1393	9.2530	2.80%

[Only 20% of Black workers and 16% of Hispanic workers can work from home.](#) With housing out of reach in the coastal communities for those with low or modest incomes, workers have to commute in. If they can't afford a car (11% of LA Co households) and cycling is unsafe, how about transit?

The Beach Cities have always been a transit-poor region. The [recently-approved NextGen Bus Plan](#) will [nearly eliminate all LA Metro bus service west of PCH](#) in the South Bay, where many low-wage service jobs are located. Coupled with Covid-related service cutbacks (Sunday service even on weekdays), transit has become dangerously crowded and/or nonexistent.

At the state level, Gov Newsom issued an executive order banning the sale of gasoline-powered cars in CA by 2035. If we were able to wave a magic wand and replace all internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles with battery electric vehicles/cars (EV), we would still produce more than half the current local air and water pollution (brake and tire dust), shift our pollution burden elsewhere (replicating one unjust system for another), and reduce our GHG emissions too little to prevent catastrophic climate change.

The world does not have enough rare earth elements (for batteries) and manufacturing capacity to replace the 300 million ICE vehicles currently in the US with EV cars. Doing so, we would need to **double** our national electricity generation at a time when 43% of our current capacity comes from coal and nuclear power plants that need to be retired.

We're not even likely to ever replace the 7 million cars & light trucks in Los Angeles County with EV cars. But we can replace most of them with smaller electric vehicles such as bikes/trikes, scooters, mopeds, golf carts, and mini-cars. We should also use electric, on-demand vehicles called elevators.

A South Bay Cities' Council of Governments transportation study found 50% of all trips in southwest LA County are < 1 mile and 70% are < 3 mi. If we replace the solo short automobile trips for most able-bodied people, we can easily reduce our vehicle miles traveled by car (VMT) by > 25% and greatly lower the number of cars that people need to own/insure privately.

With supportive and safe cycling infrastructure like travel lanes separated from much heavier cars, SUVs and trucks; we can make walking, rolling and cycling safe and pleasant. We can speed up transit with dedicated bus lanes. With fewer cars on the road, this car-lite (but not car-free) lifestyle can get us around just as quickly. This won't work for the long travel distances of Montana, but could definitely work in a highly urbanized area such as LA, especially when coupled with expanded transit.

This is doable with existing technology, reduces rather than replicates environmental injustices, and would save us time and money. We can even lose weight without dieting! Governments in Europe, Asia and Latin America are doing it and their citizens love it. This could be us.



Clockwise from top left: a Dutch mom with two kids on an eTrike, Olivia de Havilland riding a bicycle with trailer on a Hollywood studio lot, Olivia de Havilland on her trike at age 100+, a “Rolling School Bus” in Limerick, Ireland.

The League has long been thought leaders in promoting evidence-based, progressive policies. Today, many Americans are discovering the undemocratic nature of the electoral college. In 1970, the League publicly called for abolition of the electoral college. In the same year, the League supported [spending less on federal and state highway construction and redirecting the funding to transit](#) and [active/less polluting modes of transportation](#).

100 years ago, LWV founders rode bicycles to their meetings. Cycles (cycles, tricycles, and more) are still the most efficient (energy per kilometer) form of land transportation around. Electric bicycles and tricycles have transformed mobility in cities around the world with much worse weather and hillier terrain than Los Angeles.

Active mobility coupled with transit can be the most cost-effective and fastest way to move people around urban environments. As I explained in [Data-Driven Climate Action](#), we need to work locally to build political pressure for these proven solutions.

Today, Los Angeles County is the first in the nation to plan for corridor pricing (not just facility charges for some roads) and directing the money to the neighborhoods negatively impacted by traffic and pollution in a process called environmental reparations¹.

Would you like to get involved? We need volunteers to attend public meetings (via Zoom), take notes, and write letters of support. We also need help running education events to help the public understand these complex issues. Contact me at gspeng.lwv@gmail.com.

In other news, [Metro LA backed down on the I5/605 4-lane expansion that would have demolished hundreds of homes](#).

Video breaking down what those road changes would look like for one street, Artesia Boulevard in North Redondo Beach. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kGVbNmeKqHg>

Traffic collision data

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12HKWjA95k9rBAKpeIOVKnza0oG2k5YzaBjzYeKDSf2c/edit?usp=sharing>

Traffic collision maps

¹ Prof Martin Wachs explained how this works at 10/15/2020 [UCLA Luskin Center seminar about the History of Traffic in LA](#)

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/12HKWjA95k9rBAKpeIQVKnza0oG2k5YzaBjzYeKDSf2c/edit?usp=sharing>