

CONSTRUCTION ON DOWNTOWN LONG BEACH SEPARATED BIKEWAY TO BEGIN

LONG BEACH, Calif. (Jan. 31, 2011) –Long Beach will soon become the first Southern California city to have separated bikeways in its downtown area, designed to help cyclists and vehicles share the road more safely.

Construction on more than two miles of separated bike lanes on Broadway (heading east) and 3rd Street (heading west), between Alamitos Avenue and Golden Avenue, is scheduled to begin on Monday, January 31, 2011. Upon completion of the project, scheduled for mid-March, bicycles traveling on the two one-way downtown thoroughfares will be separated from vehicle traffic by a painted median island and an asphalt curb adjacent to on-street parking.

“This bicycle project is an example of what makes Long Beach a leader in improving mobility,” said Mayor Bob Foster. “As a regular cyclist myself, I know that this lane will greatly improve road safety for both bicycles and cars in Downtown Long Beach.”

The protected bikeway on Broadway and 3rd streets is a pilot project to create an attractive transportation alternative for travel into downtown. Modeled after a similar design installed in New York, it also creates a more livable environment for the increasing number of residents who make downtown their home.

The ultimate configuration of the bikeway project will allow for two lanes of through traffic, one parking lane and a protected bike lane on both Broadway and 3rd Street. New “bike signals”, traffic signals designed specifically for bikes, along the separated lanes will help regulate vehicle left turns across the bikeway, helping to further reduce bicycle-car conflicts.

“This project will improve the livability of the downtown area by providing safe and sustainable transportation infrastructure and esthetics that are attractive to new businesses and residents,” said Vice Mayor Suja Lowenthal. “As an employment center where nearly 80 percent of the people who work downtown drive alone in a car, these separated bikeways will encourage people to consider riding a bike to work. It’s good for their health, good for the environment and it’s good for Long Beach.”

The separated bikeways in downtown Long Beach are part of the City’s plans to provide throughways for Long Beach residents and visitors of all ages and skill levels to ride safely throughout the city.

“These new bike lanes will connect Downtown neighborhoods and provide a safe route for cyclists,” said Councilmember Robert Garcia. “This is a major step towards becoming America’s most bike friendly city.”

The project is funded by local transportation funds, no general funds are used.

For construction updates and information, please contact the project hotline number, 562-908-3518. More information about the project is available online at <http://www.bikelongbeach.org> or on the City of Long Beach YouTube channel.

Details of the Downtown Separated Bikeways Project on Broadway and 3rd:

- The separated bikeways were approved as a 12-month demonstration project by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC). The project allows the City to test the safety and efficiency of this new design. Long Beach will conduct studies and if the project is found to be successful, the FHWA and the CTCDC may choose to adopt this design as a standard application that can be used by all cities. A successful project may also allow the City to make the downtown bikeways more permanent by installing landscaped medians.
- During construction of the separated bikeways, parking on the north side of Broadway and the south side of 3rd Street will be impacted and in some cases will not be accessible. For the

convenience of residents, during the construction period, they will be allowed to park their cars in designated City lots for free.

- Once the downtown bikeways are completed, 171 spaces on the north side of Broadway and south side of 3rd Street will be available for parking, a reduction of 13 percent from the present condition. This is anticipated to be offset by the increased number of bicycle and pedestrian trips through the downtown corridors.
- While vehicle lanes will be reduced from three to two lanes on Broadway and 3rd Street, improved signal timing and a reduction in vehicle-bicycle incidents will benefit all road users. During most hours of the day and night, two lanes can easily accommodate the traffic demands on Broadway and on 3rd Street.
- Bike signals are the primary safety feature of this project, and will be coordinated with the new left-turn arrows that have been installed at most of the intersections on Broadway and 3rd Street. When the left turn arrow is green, people on bikes will see a red bike signal, requiring them to stop and allow cars to complete the left turn.
- Residents benefit from a community that promotes walking and cycling, which is attracting new retail and service businesses to the downtown area. Home ownership in downtown has increased at a faster rate than any other part of the city, and more people who live downtown do not own a vehicle as compared to the rest of Long Beach. Many people choose to live in a place like downtown because they enjoy a more active lifestyle that they can walk or ride a bike to most places they want to go. This separated bikeway will go a long way toward making that a reality.
- Businesses benefit from increased customer access and bike and foot traffic. In many ways, Broadway and 3rd Street have served as a high-speed throughway for people getting on or off the 710 Freeway to rush to their homes or jobs outside of downtown and beyond. The new bikeways will encourage people in cars to drive within the stated speed limit making businesses along those two streets more visible to people driving by.
- The City has made a commitment to create a more livable, healthy, and active community. This goal requires an investment in infrastructure that encourages people to walk and ride a bike. With the City Council's vision to become the most bicycle friendly city in America, an investment in this type of bikeway is important to the health and vitality of the community.

###