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BIKE LONG BEACH – MAKING LONG BEACH SAFER

The Bike Long Beach public works campaign not only provides resources for cyclists, it is adding needed transportation infrastructure that benefits all of Long Beach – driver and pedestrians, and business and residential neighborhoods.

The city is investing more than \$17 million of grant money for projects that get cyclists off sidewalks in shopping districts, enable better traffic flow in downtown Long Beach, provide a safer biking environment for families traveling between homes and schools, and make it easier for people to leave their cars at home for neighborhood trips or commuting to work. In short, improvements make Long Beach both a safer and more enjoyable city.

According to U.S. Olympic cyclist Tony Cruz, a Long Beach resident and the city’s cycling ambassador, safety on the road begins by drivers, cyclists and pedestrians working together to follow road safety laws and use common sense.

“Predictable behavior by drivers, cyclists and pedestrians helps to ensure that everyone can travel together safely,” said Cruz. “Following all state and municipal traffic laws is the responsibility of everyone on the road: drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.”

For their safety, cyclists should keep in mind two important points when riding on Long Beach streets:

1. Bicycle riders on public roads have the same rights – and responsibilities – as motorists, and are subject to the same rules and regulations.
2. Obeying traffic signs, riding in the same direction as traffic, and using hand signals are both the law AND are essential to help drivers anticipate cyclists’ actions.

The following is a partial list of road safety programs funded by transportation grants.

- **Bike Education Campaign.** Long Beach is ramping up a comprehensive bicycle safety program to educate youngsters, adults, seniors and the community at large about the rules of the road and how to cycle wisely. A “Safe Routes to School” program, including bike rodeos, will be conducted at all Long Beach elementary and junior high schools through 2011. These programs will both encourage and educate children and parents about riding to school safely with a goal of increasing student (and parent) ridership to neighborhood schools.

An outdoor campaign that includes banners and bus shelter ads will begin appearing throughout Long Beach in 2011. This program will be accompanied by media and community relations programs that will amplify road safety messages.

- **Bike Boulevards.** The first of three funded bike boulevards is being completed along Vista Street in Belmont Heights. These projects are designed to calm traffic along stretches of residential roadway to encourage safe cycling and “safe routes to school.” The Vista Bike Boulevard connects together three Long Beach schools – Horace Mann Elementary, Lowell Elementary, Rogers Middle School – and includes roundabouts at major intersections and other features. Future Bike Boulevards are currently

planned for Sixth Street through Alamos Heights and paralleling Magnolia and Atlantic Avenue from downtown to 70th Street in North Long Beach.

- **Separated Bike Ways.** Modeled after public works projects in New York City, Paris and other bike-friendly communities, the first protected bike ways will be installed in downtown Long Beach along Broadway (heading east) and Third Street (heading west) and will benefit all downtown traffic. Along these two streets dedicated bike-only paths will be separated from motorists and parked cars by a landscaped road median. Instead of parking adjacent to sidewalk curbs, cars will park along the newly constructed medians. Special bike-only traffic signals complete the bike way project. This project keeps bicycles off of busy downtown sidewalks and encourages safer, one-way travel among vehicles and bicycles.
- **Bike-Friendly Business Districts.** Four popular Long Beach shopping districts have been selected for a pilot program to encourage safe bike use by neighborhood residents. The four areas – Bixby Knolls, East Village Arts District, 4th Street Retro Row, Anaheim Street – each feature local shops and businesses that cater to neighborhood needs. The initiatives include (need some blurring).
- **Metro Blue Line Bike and Pedestrian Access Plan.** A comprehensive plan to provide enhanced neighborhood access to the nine Blue Line stations in Long Beach is under development.
- **Second Street Green Sharrows** – An award-winning project in 2009 (from the Institute of Transportation Engineers) name of award), the green sharrows in Belmont Shore designate proper, shared road use of Second Street by cyclists and drivers. Most important, the sharrow project is keeping bikes off the busy sidewalks – cycling on sidewalks is illegal in designated business districts – providing a safer pathway for pedestrians. Through the first year of the sharrow program, there has been no increase in accidents, although bike usage in Belmont Shore has increased by more than 30 percent.

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