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## UPDATE: Sunset Traffic Solutions

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Dear Friends —

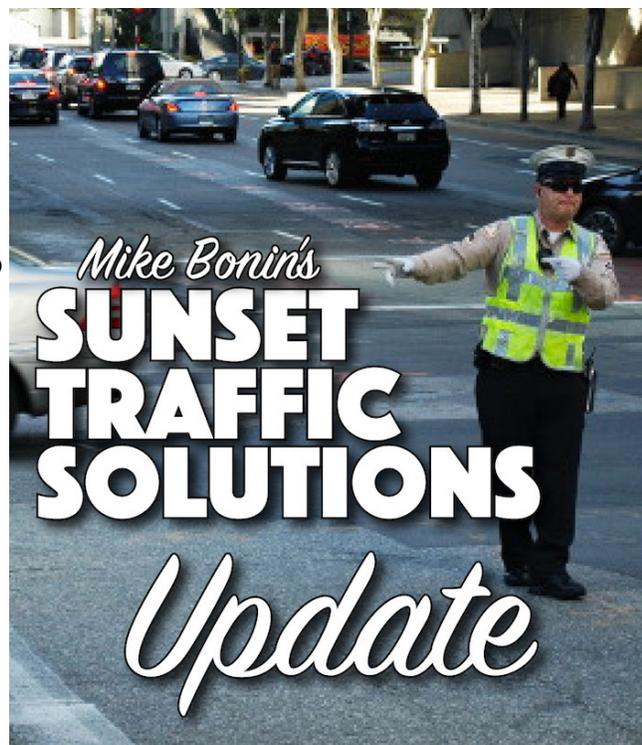
Earlier this year, I asked neighbors in Brentwood to join me as I launched my Sunset Traffic Improvement Initiative - a major effort to reduce the gridlock on Sunset Boulevard. Traffic on Sunset is infuriating, and it has been getting incrementally worse for decades. The challenges that contribute to traffic on this important stretch of road are numerous and complex, and it is only through creativity and collaboration that we are going to make progress in solving this problem.

In February, I hosted a community charrette - a workshop where people could hear information from leading international transportation experts, discuss the causes of congestion, and offer their ideas and suggestions. Community feedback received at the charrette, as well as in subsequent

online surveys and community meetings, has been very helpful in guiding engineering and demand management solutions on the corridor. I promised at the charrette that my team and I would seriously consider each and every suggestion neighbors and area stakeholders made, and that is what we have been doing for the past few months.

This report will update you on the work we have been doing to evaluate your suggestions and move them forward. As of now, our work can be summarized into 11 different categories, including:

1. Deploying Traffic Control Officers



2. Restriping the Sunset eastbound to the I-405 north and southbound on-ramps
3. Improving Lane Assignment Signage on Sunset to the I-405
4. Using Technology to Improve Traffic Flow on 405 On-Ramps
5. Turn Restrictions
6. Adjusting Signal Timing
7. Launching a Transportation Collaborative
8. Limiting Traffic Caused by New Development
9. Making Physical Improvements to the Roadway
10. Requiring Better Construction Management Programs
11. Encouraging Trip Reduction Strategies at Existing Businesses

In this update, we will outline the improvements in progress, as well as the plans underway to incorporate your suggestions for improving traffic on Sunset Boulevard. We will additionally look at longer-range programs and suggestions offered by neighbors in Brentwood. [You can see a full list of suggestions made at the charrette and in surveys here.](#) The link includes both feedback and status reports.

### **1. Traffic Control Officers**

At the request of many, many attendees and respondents, on May 16, 2016 Traffic Officers were deployed at the intersections of Sunset & Bundy and Sunset & Burrington to help move traffic and prevent motorists from blocking intersections for cross traffic during afternoon peak travel times. Community feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and our Traffic Officers at Key Intersections (TOKI) pilot program will continue. People report less conflict with their fellow motorists at intersections where officers are deployed, some have also reported faster travel times through the corridor.

During the course of this pilot, two quantitative measures are being tracked as well: travel times on Sunset, eastbound from Kenter Avenue to the I-405, and the frequency of intersection blockage. The TOKI pilot will go on hiatus for two weeks from October 17-28 to allow LADOT to measure travel times and intersection blockage without the officers present. The Traffic Officers will return to the intersection October 28.

### **2. Restripe Sunset eastbound to the I-405 northbound and southbound on-ramps**

The stretch of roadway on eastbound Sunset near the 405 on-ramps received the greatest number of comments and neighbors provided some great ideas on how this section of road could be redesigned to move better.

My office is actively working with Caltrans and LADOT to redesign this intersection to potentially add additional access lanes on Sunset Eastbound to both the I-405 north and southbound to smooth this bottleneck. DOT has completed the design and it has been presented to Caltrans for their review and approval.

### **3. Improve Lane Assignment Signage on Sunset to the I-405**

Many neighbors expressed frustration and confusion with the lane assignment signage leading to the 405 Freeway. Correcting this confusing signage is part of our action plan. The project will

begin in earnest once we complete the task of the restriping of the Sunset and I-405 interchange, as referenced in Item 2, above.

#### **4. Using Technology to Improve Traffic Flow on the 405 On-Ramps**

One of the largest contributing factors to traffic on Sunset is cars getting backed up onto the street while waiting on the on-ramp to the 405 freeway. To help make traffic on the on-ramp flow more efficiently, I am working with Caltrans and LADOT on a “Dynamic Corridor Ramp Metering System” for the 405 Freeway, between the I-10 to the 101 freeways.

This technology would use real-time data from both City traffic signals and Caltrans ramp meters to calculate the best timing for the lights that allow cars to drive from the on-ramp to the freeway. The first phase will test new software during the busiest times on the on-ramp. Next, we will work to integrate the Dynamic Ramp Metering System with our City traffic signals, so we can better manage congestion on the 405 and across the corridors that intersect with the 405. This solution involves working closely with state partners, and is both innovative and ambitious. It also might be a game-changer for improving traffic on Sunset.

LADOT and Caltrans are currently coordinating to sync their data and allow their systems to work seamlessly. This coordination is expected to take about 60 days, after which the agencies will present a specific timeline for the pilot project.

#### **5. Turn Restrictions**

Many of the people who submitted comments had ideas for restricting turn movements along Sunset Boulevard to help keep traffic moving, and nearly 78% of participants said they would support turn restrictions to help make traffic on Sunset flow better.

Turn restrictions are often controversial, as they limit the ability of neighbors to get around the neighborhood, so we are asking for further community input before any turn restrictions are implemented. Please complete the short survey below to weigh-in on the specific turn restrictions being proposed for Sunset.

[Click here to take the turn restriction survey.](#)

I am going to ask the Brentwood Community Council, the various homeowners associations, and other stakeholders to circulate this survey to make sure we get extensive input.

#### **6. Signal Timing Adjustments**

A frequent comment we received was asking for traffic signals on Sunset to be better synchronized. While all of the City’s traffic signals are already connected to an Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control (ATSAC) system (which monitors and adjusts the timing of traffic signals at every intersection to optimize traffic flow), there are obviously steps that can be taken to improve how this system works on Sunset.

Based on your input, I have challenged the ATSAC team to focus on the Sunset/Church intersection to experiment with the signal timing so they can find new ways to move traffic through

the corridor. The one-week experimental run at the Sunset/Church intersection will take begin on October 31, and we will be reporting back with the quantitative results of those changes.

## **7. Transportation Collaborative**

A major component of my Sunset Traffic Improvement Initiative, the Sunset Transportation Collaborative, is made up of representatives from educational, cultural, and business institutions along the Sunset Corridor. My goal is for the collaborative to grow into a genuine Transportation Management Association, a non-profit collaborative that will provide and coordinate transportation services in and around the corridor. Similar organizations have seen successful trip reduction through such transportation management plans at Warner Center, UCLA, and more recently in Century City. Through ride-sharing, joint shuttles, coordinated scheduling, and more, the number of trips on Sunset Boulevard can be significantly reduced, easing the gridlock we encounter.

The first phase for the collaborative (which we are calling the Sunset Educational Corridor Association, or SECA) is focusing on educational and cultural institutions along the corridor, including St. Martin of Tours, Brentwood Sunshine Preschool, Brentwood School, Archer School for Girls, Mount St. Mary's University, University Synagogue, and the Getty. At the group's first meeting, we discussed some exciting programs, such as coordinating busing and school schedules to minimize traffic on Sunset. The SECA members continue to meet and collaborate to understand and analyze the corridor's transportation habits and needs. Additionally, SECA has retained a transportation consultant to gather and understand this information so that solutions like coordinated busing and scheduling, among other things, can be identified and implemented.

I am excited by the potential of this collaborative. UCLA did something similar, and while the campus population grew, the number of trips was reduced by approximately 20%.

## **8. Limiting Traffic Caused by Development**

Many people have expressed frustration and concern with traffic impacts from new development. Congestion is a multi-faceted challenge. One of the key steps we can take to combat congestion is to reduce the demand on our roadway; and one of the ways we can reduce demand is to require development projects to adopt strict, sustainable transportation requirements that reduce automobile trips.

One of the steps I am taking to tackle this issue is pursuing an update of the City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Ordinance. Drafted in 1993, the City's TDM Ordinance uses a very limited and outdated set of tools (largely vanpool and carpool incentives) and is only applicable to a very narrow set of development projects. The impacts of updating and these rules and expanding their scope could be significant.

The ordinance must be updated to include new mobility options such as flexible work schedules, on-demand shuttle service, on-site car share transportation management organizations, rideshare matching services, subsidized transit passes, and more. Further, the application of these requirements needs to be extended to apply to a much broader set of development categories.

Revising the TDM ordinance, which applies citywide, is a big task, and it is in the early stages of development. We anticipate outreach to begin in the winter of this year, with a goal of Council

adoption in 2017. As this process moves forward, there will be ample opportunities for public input.

## **9. Physical Improvements to the Roadway**

We received a lot of big ideas for physical improvements to the roadway. Though such efforts can be expensive and more often than not require additional financial resources through local, state, or federal grants, we heard you, and we will take these projects into consideration as grant funding opportunities become available. Here is a list of some of the ideas you suggested that we can explore, provided there is community support:

- Reversible lane operation
- Reconstructing parkways on Sunset and Allenford to create physical separated walk and bike paths
- Constructing longer freeway access lanes

I am asking LADOT explore the idea of a reversible lane on Sunset.

Another frequent suggestion is road widening on Sunset Boulevard - an issue that caused significant controversy in the community less than a decade ago. After consultation with the Brentwood Community Council, homeowners associations, and neighbors, if there were sufficient support, we would be willing to revisit the idea.

## **10. Requiring Better Construction Management Programs**

Many neighbors had some really good ideas about requiring contractors to file traffic plans and trip reduction strategies to mitigate construction impacts of new development. One of the first steps I have taken to begin to address some of the impacts from construction is to begin to regulate the staging of haul trucks on city streets. These trucks can often be found on city streets, parking in red zones, or staging in the center of the road. I have asked our City agencies to create a permitting system so that we can get these haul trucks out of neighborhoods and off of busy city streets.

I have also introduced legislation to the City Council to create a new ordinance in Los Angeles requiring haul trucks to obtain permits before they are allowed to park near project sites, and to strictly prohibit staging or idling haul trucks anywhere in the public right of way. The Council's Transportation Committee approved my motion and the full City Council will consider the item in early 2017.

## **11. Encouraging Trip Reduction Strategies at Existing Businesses**

Many neighbors had great suggestions about staggered work hours, tax breaks, and other incentives to encourage work at home, as well as carpooling or use of alternative transportation methods to travel to work.

Though the Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has a rule that requires workplaces with 250 or more employees to develop trip reduction strategies, that program is underfunded and underused. But we have learned that the program also has a provision that allows local cities to adopt their own local program as long as it is as restrictive as the SCAQMD program or more so, and I believe that the City of LA should adopt its own program to reform how

this rule is applied in LA. The City of LA could, for instance, lower the work site threshold of 250 employees, eliminate a provision that allows in-lieu fees instead of compliance, and gives the City the tools it needs to curb the peak hour congestion on our roadways.

This is an ambitious undertaking, and I intend to begin hearings on the program in early 2017.

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Thank you for your time and participation. Sunset Boulevard is one of the worst and most frustrating traffic chokepoints in Los Angeles, and it is only through creativity and collaboration that we will make meaningful progress to improve gridlock on the street. It is an honor working with you to put neighborhoods first.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike", written in a cursive style.

**MIKE**

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