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November 18, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Laura Rubio-Cornejo, General Manager
Department of Transportation

COMMENT REGARDING LA RIVERWAY PHASE IV BIKEPATH PROJECT COUNCIL FILE 23- 0722

Dear Ms. Rubio-Cornejo:

The Los Angeles Equine Advisory Committee would like to thank members of the Department of Transportation for presenting the proposed plan for the Phase IV Bikeway along the Los Angeles River. At that meeting, public comment focused on the danger to equestrians by bifurcating the existing Equestrian Trail to superimpose a bikeway onto the trail alignment and separate it with fencing. Additional comment letters are attached reflecting the impact on the degree of enjoyment.

This proposal would impact 100% of the equestrian traffic coming from the north side of the Los Angeles River. It is the finding of the LAEAC that the impact to equestrians cannot be mitigated to a level of insignificance by any type of fence or barrier. The environmental impact to existing users must be studied. There is no other access afforded to equestrians. Access via the Los Angeles River from decomposed granite ramps has already been removed.

The volume of equestrian traffic was not taken into account by the Phase IV study. The demographics of which include young children, novice horseback riders and senior citizens. At the meeting several women commented on the combative attitude and intimidation employed by current bicyclists illegally using equestrian trails in Griffith Park¹. The volume and frequency of equestrian use must be studied and a plan for user conflict considered.



The LAEAC also questions the jurisdiction of the City in its proposed action. According to maps, the area in question is the jurisdiction of Los Angeles County Flood Control and the trail alignment has been dedicated and deed recorded as an equestrian trail.

The third issue is the cost. The price tag for the one-mile of bikeway is now estimated to be \$9 million. Further study should be done to investigate improving the existing bike lane on Zoo Drive to Forest Lawn Drive that would leave the historic equestrian access intact.

In conclusion, the EAC would be pleased to lend its experience and share its comprehensive database of trail documents to all City Departments concerning recreational trails. Please feel free to contact me at (818) 720-7062 or Mary.Benson@lacity.org with any additional questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Mary Benson

Mary Benson, President
Los Angeles Equine Advisory Committee

cc:
City Council
Karen Bass, Mayor
Vincent Bertoni, Planning
Ted Allen, BOE
Osama Younan, DBS
Jimmy Kim, RAP
Joe Salaices, RAP
Stefanie Smith, RAP

Attachment

¹ LAMC 63.44 (B)(16) No person shall drive or ride any cycle or vehicle, whether powered by a motor or human power, except on paths, roads or drives designed and provided for such purposes