

2008 National American Planning Association Award of Excellence for Grassroots Initiative
 2007 California Chapter American Planning Association Award of Excellence for Grassroots Initiative
 2007 Los Angeles Section American Planning Association Award of Excellence for Grassroots Initiative

Central City Neighborhood Partners: Central City Community-Driven Transportation Plan



CCNP is a non-profit, non-competitive formal collaboration whose mission is to address the systemic issues that will enable families to create pathways to economic self-sufficiency and creates systemic change by developing solutions that combine services, advocacy and policy reform to effect positive change. CCNP is a leader in identifying innovative solutions for underrepresented populations. By developing partnerships and leveraging resources, the collaborative has created a one-stop delivery system that complements its advocacy and reform efforts with health and human services, education, and workforce development services under one roof.

Veronica Olmos McDonnell
 Executive Director
 volmos@laccnp.org

Project Partners

Project Management Partner & Community Mobilization

- New Economics for Women

Field Work & Community Mobilization

- ARTScorpsLA
- Asociacion de Vecinos de Clinica Msr. Oscar A. Romero
- Clinica Monseñor Oscar A. Romero
- Collective SPACE
- Public Allies
- Search to Involve Pilipino Americans

Technical Assistance & Guidance

- City of Los Angeles
 - Department of Transportation
 - First Council District
- MK Planning Consultant

The Central City Transportation Plan was funded by the California Department of Transportation Environmental Justice: Context-Sensitive Planning Grant Program

Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro Station

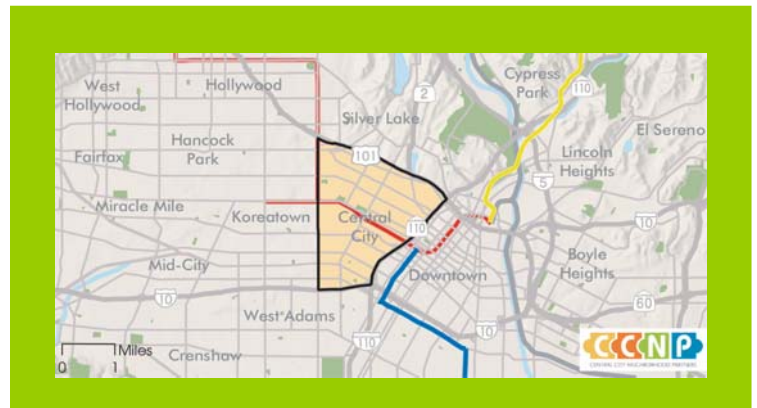


Project Overview

In 2004 with funding from Caltrans, Central City Neighborhood Partners (CCNP) initiated the first community-driven transportation plan of its kind for the densely populated and underserved Westlake community of the City of Los Angeles. What makes this project unique is that it was totally driven by the community and their desire to improve the mobility, access and safety concerns of their neighborhoods. The social value of the project's impact is unprecedented in the work that went into creating this exemplary plan—from community visioning workshops, walk audits, surveys, and community meetings, CCNP pulled on the strength of its mission and developed non-competitive and strategic partnerships with the community and visionary organizations across disciplines to develop solutions that would effect positive systemic change in the transit system. The uniqueness and success of the project has earned CCNP the 2008 National Award of Excellence for Grassroots Initiatives from the American Planning Association.

Project Area

The project area is just west of Downtown Los Angeles and includes the following neighborhoods: Westlake, Pico-Union, MacArthur Park, Temple-Beaudry and Historic Filipinotown. The project area is bounded by the 110 freeway to the east, the 10 freeway to the south, Vermont to the West, and the 101 freeway to the north.



Plan Recommendation:

Improve the level and quality of the transportation infrastructure.

Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro Station is one of the most heavily used subway stations in the city, with daily boardings in excess of 16,000, and serving 17 MTA and 1 local bus line. Still, the sidewalks and streets that support this local subway station do not provide pedestrian, bicycle and transit friendly-access. Cracked sidewalks, dangerous pedestrian crossings, city streets with long distances between signalized crosswalks, four-way streets with no bike lanes and bus stops that lack shelter, shade and lighting, contribute to the community's mobility, access and safety concerns, which has resulted in residents identifying 57 bus stops and 33 infrastructure improvements projects.

Increase transit ridership and quality of life. Develop a master plan and implementation strategy for a transit village around the 1/2 mile radius of the Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro Station to revitalize this once premier area into an economic vibrant community where families spend time and money.

Improve the built environment. Implement transportation enhancement projects that provide a safe, attractive and comfortable environment that celebrates the community's unique historic, built and natural resources.

Improve the transportation system. Develop campaign and policy solutions that support transportation infrastructure and enhancement projects, traffic safety, and improve the quality of bus service through cultural sensitivity training.

"CCNP's successful approach is a stellar example of grassroots advocacy and community building . . . This shows us that working together, we can all provide better outcomes that help make our daily lives and communities better in tangible ways."

Kurt Christiansen, AICP, a member of the California Chapter American Planning Association (December 2007)

Project Facts

In order to develop this grassroots plan, CCNP took an untraditional, but remarkably simple approach to increasing community access to transportation in the Westlake community and the surrounding neighborhoods. Using a community-based planning process to fully engage residents, the project team assembled and nurtured a team of more than 35 residents who assessed the 400 bus stops in the neighborhood; conducted 997 bus ridership surveys; polled 512 residents; and participated in 12 community meetings. In total, residents identified 33 specific transportation infrastructure improvement projects including development of a new transit village that will break ground in April 2008.

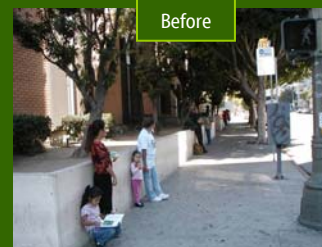
In addition, CCNP wrote three funding applications with the City of Los Angeles for \$4.5 million for transit infrastructure and pedestrian safety improvements, five projects for Safe Routes to School funding, and two proposals to the California Department of Transportation.

Next Steps

Building upon this award-winning plan, CCNP will develop a master plan and implementation strategy for a context-sensitive transit village. Working with residents, state and city transportation and planning authorities, CCNP will promote transit usage to revitalize both physically and economically Westlake's inner city neighborhoods, and to provide access to jobs, affordable housing, and health and human services around the 1/2 radius of the Westlake/MacArthur Park Metro Station.

Planning and Design With people and places in mind

CCNP uses "community living rooms" as an innovative strategy to address the community's concern that many of the bus stops are dehumanizing because they are not maintained, are dirty and barely functional. Further, residents that request maintenance of these bus stops find the system complicated and bureaucratic. For example, to repair one bus stop requires a resident to call up to five separate agencies. Community living rooms offer a short-term alternative and illustrates how bus stops can be improved, while capitalizing on the community's assets in building community living rooms to promote mobility, safety, and access, while at the same time celebrating the public realm as social space, which is so common to Latino culture.



Defining the problems & opportunities



Building the vision & making it happen

