Introduction to the Proposed Venice Bikeway Network

The purpose of this effort is to initiate a process that: (1) establishes a Venice Bikeway Network that is agreed to by Venetians so that, (2) over time the designated bikeway streets are modified with bicycling safety as the prime objective.

Venice should be an ideal neighborhood for bicycle travel. Venice Beach is a regional magnet for visitors, many of whom arrive by bicycle. Venetians already ride bicycles five time the rate of other Angelenos, and at rates similar to renowned cycling-friendly American cities such as San Francisco and Portland. Venice's flat terrain, moderate climate, relatively compact size, mixed-used housing and interesting neighborhoods encourages the use of bicycles. The 45-year old Marvin Braude Bike Trail, the most used bikeway in the County, traverses Venice.

Nevertheless, bicycling in Venice is not well supported by City agencies. Its *Mobility 2035 Plan*, for example, shows a pitifully few streets designated as bikeways. The City has also painted "sharrow" pavement markings on several other streets to encourage car drivers to considerately share the roadway with bicyclists, but sharrows only suggest safe passage with the limited data on them suggesting that they may do little to improve cycling safety outcomes.[1]

The Existing Situation:

For 45 years the Marvin Braude Coastal Bike Trail from Pacific Palisades to the base of Palos Verdes has been an important part of Venice paralleling Ocean Front Walk. This crowded beach part of the Bike Trail, however, has never been improved. Moreover, the part of the Bike Trail on Washington Boulevard sees no protection: Just an unprotected bike lane with cars traveling on the road with a posted speed limit of 35 mph to the left, and parked cars/RVs to the right.

Los Angeles agencies have not yet derived a clear picture of what constitutes a Venice Bikeway Network.

The *Mobility 2035 Plan*'s Bikeway Network (Figure 1): This map shows Venice Boulevard as the a "Tier 1" bicycle facility in Venice along with the 3/4-mile Washington Boulevard section of the Bike Trail. Main Street, Grand Avenue, Venice Way, Market Street, and Windward Way form most of the remaining *Plan'*s bikeway network. Washington Boulevard east of Oxford Avenue is shown as a "Tier II" bikeway, but has yet to have bicycle roadway markings of any kind. The map also shows Lincoln Boulevard as a bikeway.

The NavigateLA Bikeway Network (Figure 2): The *NavigateLA* website shows a more expansive Venice bikeway network, but the purpose of this map is only to show where City agencies have placed bicycle roadway markings, these being: a white line lane marking demarking the cyclist travel lane relative to vehicle traffic (red in Figure 2), a white line with a 3-foot buffer strip to further separate cyclists from cars (lighter blue), and painted sharrow markings (blue). It is not clear how *NavigateLA*'s additional streets were chosen and by whom. Nevertheless, most of the streets on the *NavigateLA* map are logical segments of a comprehensive network.

Figure 1: Mobility 2025 Plan Bikeway Network for Venice

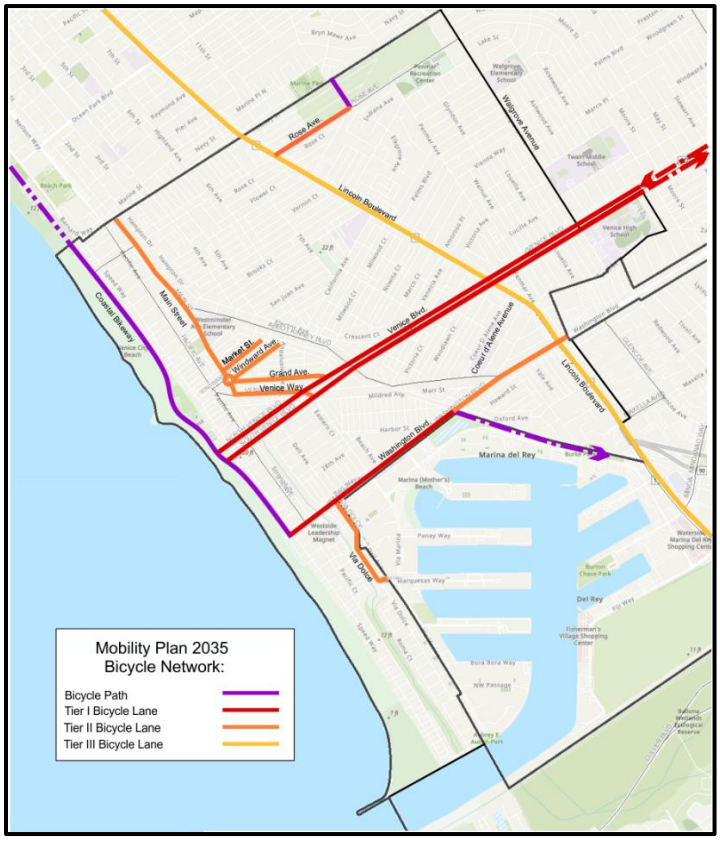
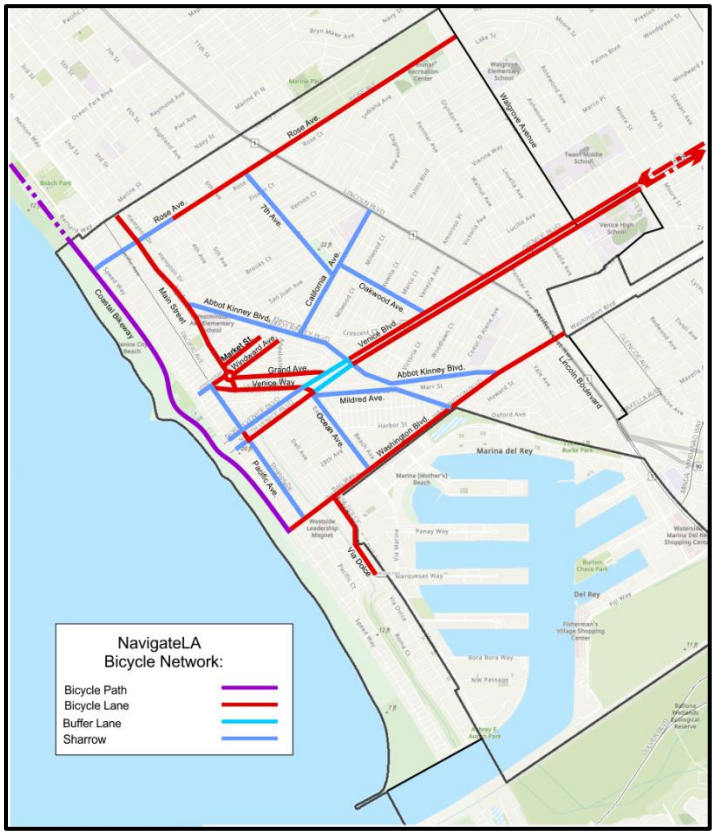


Figure 2: NavigateLA Bikeway Network



The Draft Proposed Bikeway Network for Public Review:

Bicycles, of course, may use any of Venice's streets at any time. The purpose of developing a bikeway network on only select streets is to prioritize making those streets safer for bicycling. How this might be done for any particular street will take careful thought, consultation of the latest safety research, public involvement, and funding. First, Venetians must agree on what streets might best serve the bicycling community.

In developing the Proposed Bikeway Network (Figure 3), members of the Parking, Transportation, and Infrastructure Committee have taken the City's *Mobility2035 Plan* and *NavigateLA* bicycle maps as starting points.

Bicycle networks, like street systems, include a hierarchy of segments. We have used the Caltrans Bikeway Classifications seen in Appendix A. The most important bikeway segments, "Tier I" **Bike Path**, are separated from vehicle traffic and are those that connect Venice with the larger network of city bikeways. The Marin Braude Coastal Bike Trail, being predominately a completely separated bicycle facility, is at the top of the hierarchy, but it includes Washington Boulevard from the beach to Oxford Avenue. This section is not completely separated.

The next level of importance is often referred to as a "Tier II" or "Major" **Bicycle Lane**. Washington Boulevard east of Oxford Avenue, Venice Boulevard, and Main Street connect with the larger region and are of Tier I importance. Rose Avenue, although not as important a regional connector, nevertheless is an important east-west bikeway within Venice and should also be in this second tier.

The authors had initially considered Lincoln Boulevard, especially, and Walgrove Avenue as second tier because of their regional connectivity. After having cycled both, the streets were deemed too unsafe relative to other adjacent North-South roads in the neighborhood and deemed "Problematic for Bikes." The northern-most segment of Walgrove Avenue, north of Rose Avenue, is included because it connects with the 23rd Street Bikeway into Santa Monica.

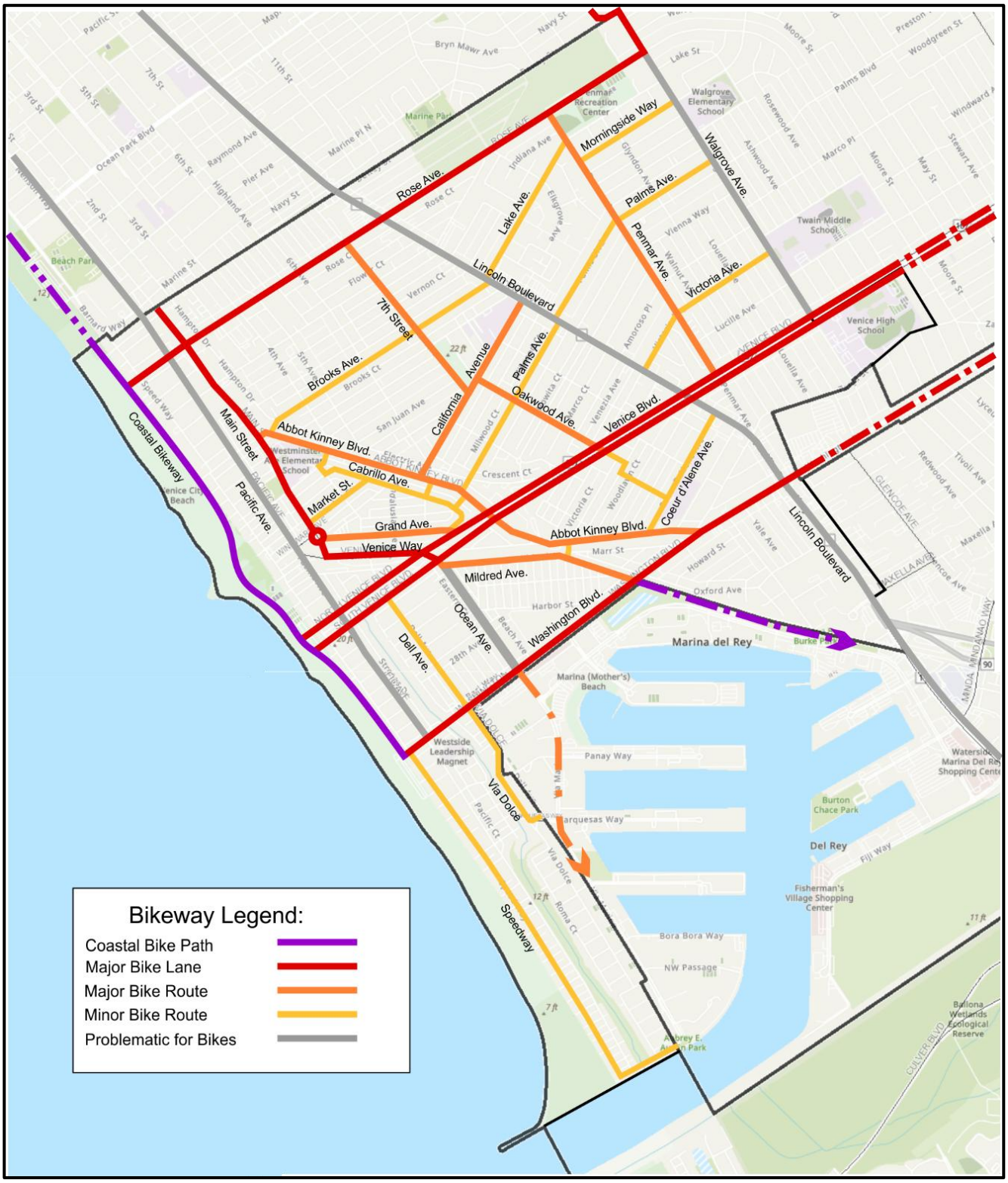
The next level of importance is the "Tier III" or "Major" **Bike Route**. These segments connect Bicycle Lanes to each other through a subarea or larger community – like Venice. The proposed Abbot Kinney Bike Route, for example, would connect the Washington Boulevard Bike Lanes with the Venice Boulevard Bike Lanes and the Main Street Bike Lanes through several neighborhoods of Venice.

Finally, there are roadways through neighborhoods that could be made safer for bicyclists of all skill levels. They would be considered a "Tier III Bicycle Boulevard" or **Minor Bike Route**. Selecting these streets is more difficult because many are similar to other streets in the neighborhood. They were chosen because they connect other segments of the network, serve schools, have slower vehicle speeds, or simply seem to attract more cyclists. Over time, these streets would be redesigned to give cyclists at least equal status through traffic calming measures.

Next Steps:

The draft Proposed Venice Bike Network needs to be reviewed by the public and any suggested changes or additions carefully considered. This will take several months and perhaps special meetings for public participation. Nothing at this point is fixed.

Figure 3: Draft Proposed Venice Bikeway Network



Appendix A: CALTRANS: A Guide to Bikeway Classification, July 2017

CLASS I BIKEWAY

Path

Class I bikeways, also known as bike paths or shared-use paths, are facilities with exclusive right of way for bicyclists and pedestrians, away from the roadway and with cross flows by motor traffic minimized. Some systems provide separate pedestrian facilities.

Class I facilities support both recreational and commuting opportunities. Common applications include along rivers, shorelines, canals, utility rights-of-way, railroad rights-of-way, within school campuses, or within and between parks.

REFERENCE: HDM INDEX 1003.1; CAMUTCD SECTION 9C.03

Vine Trail, Napa Valley

Bay Bridge Trail, Oakland

CLASS II BIKEWAY

Bike Lane

Class II bikeways are bike lanes established along streets and are defined by pavement striping and signage to delineate a portion of a roadway for bicycle travel. Bike lanes are one-way facilities, typically striped adjacent to motor traffic travelling in the same direction. Contraflow bike lanes can be provided on one-way streets for bicyclists travelling in the opposite direction.

REFERENCE: HDM INDEX 301.2; CAMUTCD SECTION 9C.04

Buffered Bike Lane

A buffered bike lane provides greater separation from an adjacent traffic lane and/or between the bike lane and on-street parking by using chevron or diagonal markings. Greater separation can be especially useful on streets with higher motor traffic speeds or volumes.

REFERENCE: CAMUTCD SECTION 9C.04, FIGURE 9C-104(CA); NACTO URBAN BIKEWAY DESIGN GUIDE/ BIKE LANES/ BUFFERED BIKE LANES

State Route 12, the Springs Region of Sonoma

Sloat Blvd, State Route 35, San Francisco

CLASS III BIKEWAY

Bike Route

Class III bikeways, or bike routes, designate a preferred route for bicyclists on streets shared with motor traffic not served by dedicated bikeways to provide continuity to the bikeway network. Bike routes are generally not appropriate for roadways with higher motor traffic speeds or volumes. Bike routes are established by placing bike route signs and optional shared roadway markings (sharrow) along roadways.

REFERENCE: HDM INDEX 1003.3; CAMUTCD SECTION 9C.07

2nd St, Oakland

Bicycle Boulevard

A Bicycle Boulevard is a shared roadway intended to prioritize bicycle travel for people of all ages and abilities. Bicycle Boulevards are typically sited on streets without large truck or transit vehicles, and where traffic volumes and speeds are already low, or can be further reduced through traffic calming.

REFERENCE: NACTO URBAN BIKEWAY DESIGN GUIDE/ BICYCLE BOULEVARDS; CAMUTCD SECTION 9C.07

Milvia St, Berkeley

CLASS IV BIKEWAY

Separated Bikeway/ Cycle Track

A Class IV separated bikeway, often referred to as a cycle track or protected bike lane, is for the exclusive use of bicycles, physically separated from motor traffic with a vertical feature. The separation may include, but is not limited to, grade separation, flexible posts, inflexible barriers, or on-street parking. Separated bikeways can provide for one-way or two-way travel.

By providing physical separation from motor traffic, Class IV bikeways can reduce the level of stress, improve comfort for more types of bicyclists, and contribute to an increase in bicycle volumes and mode share.

REFERENCE: CALTRANS DESIGN INFORMATION BULLETIN 89 – CLASS IV BIKEWAY GUIDANCE; FHWA SEPARATED BIKE LANE PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDE; NACTO URBAN BIKEWAY DESIGN GUIDE/ CYCLE TRACKS

Fulton St, Berkeley

Division St, San Francisco

References:

[1] J. B. Cicchino et al., "Not all protected bike lanes are the same: Infrastructure and risk of cyclist collisions and falls leading to emergency department visits in three U.S. cities," Accident Analysis & Prevention, vol. 141, p. 105490, Jun. 2020, doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2020.105490.