

JOSE HUIZAR COUNCILMEMBER, 14TH DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Broadway Road Diet Streetscape Improvement Adopted by Council

The City Council votes to support Councilmember Huizar's Broadway Dress Rehearsal Streetscape Design project as part of his Bringing Back Broadway initiative – the "Road Diet" is a groundbreaking large-scale project that will create a plaza setting on Broadway, improving pedestrian access with the removal of one lane of traffic

LOS ANGELES (June 29, 2013) — The Los Angeles City Council voted 11-0 in favor of creating a groundbreaking, large-scale "Complete Streets" project in Downtown Los Angeles today with the approval of Councilmember José Huizar's Broadway Dress Rehearsal Road Diet project. The nine-block project on Historic Broadway will remove one lane of traffic to provide greater pedestrian comfort and security along one of the city's busiest pedestrian streets, and make Broadway a more enjoyable place to walk, shop and spend time.

The Broadway Streetscape Master Plan is one of L.A.'s first large-scale examples of a "Complete Streets" project, with Councilmember Huizar emerging as one of the City's biggest Complete Streets proponents. The Streetscape Plan/Broadway Road Diet will be achieved in two phases with the Dress Rehearsal serving as Phase I.

"In a season of victories for our Bringing Back Broadway initiative, today's Council vote is truly significant," said Councilmember José Huizar, who heads up the Bringing Back Broadway effort. "This Phase I Dress Rehearsal will set the stage for a Streetscape Plan that puts people ahead of cars, and along with the Downtown Streetcar and significant private economic investment on the historic street, makes Broadway's future as bright as its past."

The streetscape plan's "Dress Rehearsal" is intended as the semi-permanent Phase 1 implementation of the road configuration called for in the Broadway Streetscape Master Plan. The Dress Rehearsal draws precedent from other projects across the country and in LA, including Times Square in New York City and Sunset Triangle Plaza in the Silver Lake area of Los Angeles.

The Phase I plan is funded through \$1.8 million in Measure R funds and will use cost-efficient and quickly installed materials to create traffic calming pedestrian enhancements and a three-lane road reconfiguration while funding is secured to achieve the permanent build out of the full-scale project on a block-by-block basis.

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Phase 1 will reconfigure Broadway from four traffic lanes to three traffic lanes between 2nd Street and 11th Street. LADOT will implement the Dress Rehearsal, using pavement treatments and physical indicators to delineate publicly accessible space within the roadway. These semi-permanent treatments leave flexibility to update configurations before the cost of a full construction build-out is undertaken if modifications are desired and necessary.

The Phase 1 "Dress Rehearsal" treatment along Broadway:

Reduces crosswalk widths for pedestrians; Reconfigures the roadway for more efficient, predictable and streamlined vehicular travel; Promotes calmer traffic and increased pedestrian activity; Provides 24-hour curbside parking and loading to support Broadway businesses; Creates an iconic destination for residents, visitors, and tourists; Enhances pedestrian amenities – increases public realm for gathering and public activities; Sets the stage for the future Downtown L.A. Streetcar; Streamlines MTA bus service; Bolsters economic vitality

Aspects of the permanent Broadway Streetscape Master Plan's full-scale build out include:

Widened sidewalks and curb extensions; Reduced crosswalk widths; Enhanced pedestrian crosswalk treatments; Reconfiguration of the street to three lanes of traffic; Curbside 24-hour parking; Loading and valet areas to support Broadway merchants; Transit stations; Enhanced lighting; Bike racks; Wayfinding signage; Trees and plantings; Storm water retention and recycling system

Elsewhere, similar plans have had positive impacts on economic development as well as pedestrian experience.

According to the NYC DOT, a similar semi-permanent pedestrian enhancement project in Union Square North resulted in a 16 percent decrease in speeding, with injury crashes dropping by 26 percent. The area experienced 49 percent fewer commercial vacancies, and, once implemented, 74 percent of users preferred the new configuration. The same report indicates that in areas where a curb lane was turned into a pedestrian/seating area, the location saw a 172 percent increase in retail sales, compared to 18 percent borough-wide.

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Bringing Back Broadway

Bringing Back Broadway is a 10-year plan launched by Councilmember Huizar and supporters in January 2008 with the goal of revitalizing Broadway. With its 12 historic theaters and historic turn-of-the century architecture, Broadway was once the City of Los Angeles' entertainment and retail mecca.

Under the Bringing Back Broadway initiative a number retail and hotel spaces have plans to open on Broadway including Urban Outfitters and Ace Hotel coming to the Rialto and United Artist Theaters respectfully; a full-scale entertainment and dining venue renovation at Clifton's Cafeteria; Jeweler Tarina Tarantino "Sparkle Factory" near Broadway and 9th; Stockholm-based global fashion brand Acne flagship store and signature café in Broadway's Eastern Columbia Building. Numerous restaurants, including Alma by noted chef Ari Taymor; Figaro Bistro by the Mgaieth family; UMAMIcatessen, the multi-kitchen concept from L.A.'s venerable Umami Burger; and New York City's Two Boots Pizza have opened along the corridor, alongside new retailers, markets and boutiques.

And under Councilmember Huizar's leadership, a streetcar is close to returning to Downtown Los Angeles for the first time in half a century with Downtown L.A. voters approving an assessment tax and the City Council supporting 30 years of maintenance funding in March.

Special thanks to Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation Pedestrian Unit and Metro for their leadership and assistance in moving this project forward. Also, thanks to the Historic Downtown, Fashion and Downtown Center Business Improvement Districts who will help oversee maintenance of the project.

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