




## Dana Gabbard: Why My Community Is the Best for Transit

By Dana Gabbard | Jun 23, 2009 |  8 COMMENTS

6\_23\_09\_tut\_bus.jpg The Tut Bus in front of the LACMA. Photo:

[The Metro Library](#)

*(E*ditor's Note: This is the first in what will hopefully be a series of residents defending their community as the best for car-free living in Los Angeles. Make your submissions to [damien@streetsblog.org](mailto:damien@streetsblog.org). For more information on the series, [visit yesterday's story.](#))

I am a resident of the Wilshire corridor (especially the stretch from Alvarado to Fairfax). I live, work and do most of my living along that famous boulevard. And do so easily sans car. Wilshire is lined with places to eat, nightspots, markets, medical offices, famous museums, etc. Apartment complexes cluster in the Miracle Mile, Wilshire Center, Westlake, etc.

Daytime you have frequent local public transit service from Metro (Line 20—downtown L.A. to Westwood Bl.) and Big Blue Bus (Line 2—Westwood Blvd. to downtown Santa Monica). Overnight line 20 serves the entire street (16 miles!) with owl service that operates on a 30 minute headway! Plus you have the Rapid 720 and during weekday peak the Super Express 920 for key linkages and long-distance travel. Western Ave. to downtown L.A. is also served by the Metro subway. Several neighborhoods (Koreatown, Miracle Mile, Pico/Union) have DASH community circulators. And via various connections you have access to the web of Rapid, busway and Metro Rail services that criss-cross the County plus Metrolink and Amtrak for regional access and beyond. It can be mindboggling when you



understand how transit access along Wilshire works and how to make use of it.

It is a diverse community, with many areas very livable—going along Wilshire you’ll spot people walking to local businesses and nightspots. You also see people biking along the street fairly often.

Here is an example based on my experience on the day I wrote this: From my apartment this morning I walked a block and a half to a bus stop and caught a westbound Line 20 bus to work. At the end of the workday I walked a block to the Private Mailbox location I get my mail at and picked up the latest batch of transit agency agendas etc. to hit 3010 Wilshire #362. I crossed the street and minutes later boarded a line 20 bus westbound to Fairfax. Walked to my allergy doctor’s office to get my shot. Afterward walked to a nearby bus stop, caught a line 20 bus eastbound after a few minutes and disembarked in mid-Miracle Mile to have dinner at an excellent Indian restaurant I started frequenting a few months ago. After my repast it was only steps to a bus stop where I caught another eastbound line 20, which carried me to the cyber cafe at Wilshire/Normandie where I am writing this. Right outside it is the bus stop where I will catch the bus that carries me home.

So I would nominate the Wilshire corridor mid-city segment as the most public transit friendly neighborhood in L.A.

---

Filed Under: [socata](#), [Transit Advocacy](#), [Where is the Best Place for Transit?](#)

Subscribe to our

**DAILY EMAIL DIGEST**

Enter Email



SIGN UP

---

**MOST RECENT**

Today's Headlines





Eyes on the Street: New Bike Lanes on Avenue 19 and First Street



### Today's Headlines



Some Actionable Transportation Ideas for L.A. City Councilmember-Elect Katy Young Yaroslavsky



Eyes on the Street: Glendora Village Parklets





LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS 

Sort by Newest ▾

**Erik G.** • 13 years ago

A couple of other Wilshire corridor services:

The newish FlyAway bus from Westwood to LLAX

The even newer AmtrakCalifornia bus from Westwood to Van Nuys train station connecting to northbound Surfliners going to Santa Barbara.

^ | ▾ • Reply • Share ›

**Wad** • 13 years ago

Joel Ramos wrote:

*Isn't this the corridor where BRU is advocating for a Bus Only Lane? Does traffic ever so bad there that it would help improve reliability and reduce travel time?*

Whatever the BRU's position is, basic rationality dictates you take the opposite position. That's been talked to death, though. Expounding on it gives the illusion that the BRU is relevant.

For the second part of the question: Yes, Metro is planning "bus-only" lanes for Wilshire Boulevard. As for the second question: Metro makes the case that bus only lanes will improve reliability and travel time.


Travel time would be improved, but by how much remains to be seen. Will bus lanes make Wilshire more reliable? Highly doubtful.

Here are a few problems:

1. When Metro opened the Orange Line in 2005, it has maintained that at just 20,000 daily boardings, it has been over capacity since Day 1. And the Orange Line is as ideal bus rapid transit as it comes. It doesn't have to fight traffic and boarding is relatively fast. Yet for all the expense of building the Orange Line, you get service that tops out at somewhere beneath 20,000 boardings.

This pretty much means that BRT is inappropriate for the very high ridership of Los Angeles.

It certainly would be inappropriate for the 720 corridor, which has around 70,000 boardings and has to contend with parallel and intersecting traffic.

It also calls for something to be done about the couple dozen or so local bus corridors that have 

higher ridership than the Orange Line.

ALSO ON STREETS BLOG



## 2. The "bus-only" lanes will have too many bottlenecks. For one thing, L.A. defines "buses only" as including taxis, limousines, and cars with 2 or more people. Cars have to wait for pedestrians to clear. Next you will likely have the city of L.A. seeking dispensations for taxis.

By Damien Newton | Dec 7, 2011

Then, you'll have lane intruders, such as scofflaw cars who'll try to sneak by when the cops or It's official, many Westside neighborhood leaders really don't want bus-only lanes. After reading a letter from the Tiger Team isn't looking or even cars who'll just pull in to pick up or drop off someone.

from the Brentwood Community Council, which can be read after the jump, exhorting residents to protest the inclusion of Wilshire Bus-Only Lanes in the area. "West of the 405," as made the above map, will contain all of the area's "bus only" lanes.

## 3. The issue of three incompatible classes of service has not been resolved. Wilshire has local (20), Rapid (720), and Rapid Rapid (920) buses. How will leapfrogging be handled? Probably by merging into traffic lanes, but ...

By Steven Frein | Jun 24, 2009

Photo: Marco Siguenza/Flickr (Editor's note: This is the second in a series of local residents talking up their neighborhood in an effort to discover Los Angeles' best community for car-free living based on car traffic that doesn't have to take Wilshire will migrate to another street. This slows down all of transit accessibility as well as bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. Yesterday the Southern California Transit Advocate's Dana Gabbard took up for the [...]

## 4. Taking away two lanes of traffic doesn't reduce congestion; it merely displaces it. Whatever the buses parallel to and intersecting with Wilshire. And for the remaining lanes, that already move glacially with no separate space for buses, they are somehow going to have to absorb the traffic of one lane. You can pretty much rule out leapfrogging.

By Damien Newton | Jan 12, 2011

5. If you build bus only lanes, they will come. But you really do not want to encourage more people to ride buses where too many people are riding now. You knew it was bound to happen. The Brentwood Community Council, the community group fighting the last remaining portion of the Wilshire Bus Only Lanes project planned for the Westside, is seizing on a seemingly innocuous motion on today's Transportation Committee Meeting. The motion asks for the LADOT to study the impacts of the Metro [...]

## 6. A survey to determine the opinions, concerns and wishes of young adults and teens (16-25 year-olds) will be published in a special issue of the bus line.

By Damien Newton | Oct 30, 2007

http://www.surveymonkey.com... At a joint meeting of Metro and the Southern California Transit Advocates, both groups pleaded for greater involvement in the responses provide "Subway to the Sea" (officially titled Westside Extending public transportation demands of the Next Generation of transit users Transit Corridor Study) transit extension. The meeting took place at El Rey theatre on Wilshire Blvd, and attracted roughly two dozen activists and residents. [...]

## 7. The information & responses provide "Subway to the Sea" (officially titled Westside Extending public transportation demands of the Next Generation of transit users Transit Corridor Study) transit extension. The meeting took place at El Rey theatre on Wilshire Blvd, and attracted roughly two dozen activists and residents. [...]

By Damien Newton | Jun 22, 2009

Isn't this the corridor where BRU is advocating for a Bus Only Lane? Does traffic ever so bad there that it would help improve reliability and reduce travel time? Photo of a Wilshire Rapid via Googiesque/Flickr. Last Friday I received a forwarded email from Dana Gabbard of So.CA.TA, fame from someone looking to move to Los Angeles. This future resident wanted to know what the best neighborhood for transit riders was in L.A. While Gabbard can certainly offer a take on [...]

## 8. I wrote a "LA Transit Guide for Newbies" a few days ago... it has kind of the same general tone

By Damien Newton | Nov 7, 2008

http://irwinc.blogspot.com/... Metro Schedules Community Meetings on Wilshire BRT



We Won't Have to Worry About Local Buses on Rapid Routes after Wilshire Get's BRT It's been exactly eight months since Streetsblog last checked in on Metro's plan to place a bus-only lane on Wilshire Boulevard, but now Metro is ready to discuss the preliminary results of their environmental studies and solicit feedback from the [..]



**Sirinya Tritipeskul Matute** • 13 years ago

I love this entry! My dream is to hunker down on Wilshire Boulevard, within proximity of a future subway stop. Thanks, Dana!

Reply · Share ›



**Rosemary** • 13 years ago

Hear! Hear! Hear! Wilshire corridors super transit friendly. Can't wait to hear what other car free Angelenos have to say! And of course, work on my own submission reppin' the Eastside. :) Streetsblog Los Angeles Editorial Independence Policy / Donor Transparency Policy

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Madness** • 13 years ago

FOLLOW US:

Great testimony to a great area. Love the picture too. The picture looks like it's from the 70's when King Tut first rolled into town. Love the series ideal. I hope to submit soon.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›

# STREETS BLOG LA

[Subscribe](#) [Privacy](#) [Do Not Sell My Data](#)

