

How Los Angeles Can Improve its Delivery and Maintenance of Protected Bike Lanes (and Why it Should)

Micah Wilcox • July 2026

Issue

The city of Los Angeles has longstanding goals to build more protected bike lanes, which are physically separated from motor vehicle traffic lanes. Building protected bike lanes was a major goal of the Mobility Plan 2035, which the City Council passed 11 years ago. In 2024, with only 5% of the plan completed, voters passed Measure HLA to speed the plan's implementation. However, even since Measure HLA's passage, Los Angeles has not delivered protected bike lanes faster or at scale, and it has struggled to maintain existing protected bike lanes (Figure 1). This gap between policy and implementation suggests there exist challenges in how Los Angeles' streets-focused entities, the Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) and the Bureau of Street Services (StreetsLA), manage these projects.

Along with the downtown Los Angeles transportation management organization FASTLinkDTLA, this project examines how Los Angeles could improve its management and delivery of protected bike lanes, researching best practices from cities around the world, and recommending strategies for L.A. to improve its management of bike lane projects.

Study Approach

The study had four main components: A literature review highlighting nine best practices for active transportation infrastructure project management; interviews with seven planners from three American cities with high bikeability rankings, focusing on how these cities have implemented these best practices; interviews with four active transportation advocates in Los Angeles; and a synthesis of the research to identify actionable lessons for L.A. policymakers.

Key Findings

Institutional Structure Best Practices

- » **Dedicated funding:** Regularly occurring funding, reserved across multiple budget cycles, enables governments to plan multiple projects to be delivered over time.
- » **Hierarchy:** Active transportation goals and deliverables need to be elevated within formal government structures.
- » **Standardization:** Standard designs and standard operating procedures reduce costs and speed project delivery.
- » **Asset management strategies:** Developing a plan for active transportation infrastructure can standardize inspections and maintenance while providing an opportunity to accurately estimate costs.
- » **Metrics:** Governments should collect relevant data in order to create metrics to inform decision-making.
- » **Community support strategies:** Implementing agencies should create and adhere to a plan for positive public engagement.

Staff and Interpersonal Skills Best Practices

- » **Communication and coordination:** These are critical to have among implementing organizations to reduce friction when jointly delivering and maintaining infrastructure.
- » **Leadership and culture:** Leadership and staff must both be committed to active transportation projects.
- » **Staff capacity:** Staff responsible for planning, engineering, or construction on city streets should have expertise in and resources to build active transportation projects.

