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## L.A. activists float idea of ‘freeway’ system for bikes

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(<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/.a/6a00d8341c630a53ef0120a85193c5970b-pi>)

While Los Angeles city officials and hired consultants tinker with the draft of a mammoth bike plan (<http://www.labikeplan.org/>), vocal critics in the cycling community complain it does not include enough new bike lanes and presents a mishmash of paths and routes that are unintelligible to the average cyclist.

But instead of merely nay-saying, one group of cycling advocates and bloggers known as the L.A. Bike Working Group is developing an alternative bike plan (<http://labikeplan.com/>). They are starting with a network of long-distance bike routes they are comparing to a freeway system for cyclists.

Conceptual maps of the proposed Backbone Bikeway Network (<http://www.westsidebikeside.com/the-backbone-bikeway-network-labp-20100/>) envision a network of long-distance routes designed to provide cyclists safe passage between different neighborhoods along heavily-traveled corridors, including Wilshire, Venice, Whittier and Sepulveda boulevards.

"The city really is more palatable when you have a straight shot through it, with less lights and less stop signs," said Mihai Peteu, 28, who helped design the map after holding public meetings with cyclists throughout the city. "I think cyclists deserve to have something similar to the freeway system."

It's just an idea, Peteu said. But given a little funding to paint bike lanes, improve the pavement and create shared bike-car lanes called sharrows, such a system could give cyclists a speedier way around town.


-- Tony Barboza

*Graphic courtesy of L.A. Bike Working Group*

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