

GREATER WILSHIRE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Transportation Committee

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 3, 2025 • 6:30 PM • Via Zoom

Minutes approved July 16, 2025

Date & Time	Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 6:30 PM
Location	Zoom (virtual meeting)
Chair	Romi Cortier
Minutes	Lindsay Sturman

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:35 PM by Chair Romi Cortier. Quorum was confirmed.

II. Roll Call

The following members were present:

- Romi Cortier (Chair)
- Cindy Chvatal
- Richard Gano
- Drew Kiesow
- Eliot Silver
- Sam Uretsky

Also in attendance:

- Jennifer DeVore (GWNC President)
- Lindsay Sturman (Secretary)

Absent: Jeff Carpenter, Frank Moser

III. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting

Minutes from the prior meeting were available in Board Docs.

- Motion to approve: Sam Uretsky
- Second: Romi Cortier
- Vote: Approved by show of hands (6 in favor, none opposed, none abstaining)

IV. Special Presentation — Dangerous Intersection: Wilton Place & 3rd

Street

A. Guest Presenter

Mike DeWitt, a resident living two houses from the corner of Wilton Place and 3rd Street, addressed the committee regarding ongoing traffic safety concerns at that intersection. He was accompanied by his wife, who assisted with screen display.

B. Summary of Concerns Presented

Mr. DeWitt described a pattern of serious accidents at Wilton and 3rd that has persisted since at least 2020 and likely longer. Key points included:

- Three fatalities at or near the intersection, including two individuals who died in a burning vehicle that struck a neighbor's retaining wall.
- Multiple major accidents within a single month (approximately April–May 2025), including two consecutive crashes at the intersection and one parked car totaled at approximately 4:00 PM.
- Approximately 10 neighbors reported having their legally parked vehicles totaled by accident-related impacts.
- Frequent near-miss incidents, including high-speed drivers failing to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. Mr. DeWitt personally narrowly avoided being struck by a vehicle traveling approximately 45 MPH making a left turn from Wilton onto 3rd.
- High traffic volumes on both Wilton Place (northbound/southbound) and 3rd Street, with drivers running the light on 3rd and making high-speed turns.
- Proximity to St. Brendan's Church generates regular pedestrian activity, including children.
- The intersection has a standard traffic signal but no left-turn arrow phasing. • Mr. DeWitt and neighbor Mike [surname not recorded] compiled a comprehensive photo and document record of incidents; physical copies and digital files are available to share with officials.

C. Guest: Jarrett Thompson, CD5 Transportation Deputy, LADOT

Jarrett Thompson, Transportation Deputy for Council District 5, attended to respond to community concerns. He noted the intersection is likely in CD13 (not CD5) and committed to coordinating with that office.

Key information and guidance provided by Mr. Thompson:

- Documentation: Residents were encouraged to file police reports for any future incidents, as LADOT requires documented accident data to justify a traffic control analysis. Mr. Thompson offered to run existing accident reports for the intersection.
- Process: Upon receiving resident documentation via email, Mr. Thompson will reach out to CD13 to determine whether a service request has already been submitted. If not, he will file one through 311 to initiate a formal DOT review.

- Traffic Control Report (TCR): Once initiated, DOT engineers would conduct an intersection analysis and develop options, which would then be presented to the community for input.
- Timeline: Estimated 3 months to 1 year, depending on departmental workload. Timeline may be affected by the city's focus on 2028 Olympic-related infrastructure projects.
- Potential interventions discussed:
 - Delineators / lane narrowing (national data shows this most effectively reduces speed)
 - Refreshed pavement markings and improved signage (possible short-term fixes)
 - Left-turn arrow phasing (identified as likely beneficial but costly and on a long backlog; CD13 may have available funding)
 - Speed tables (possible, but speed humps on 3rd Street not feasible)
- Speed Camera Pilot Program: Mr. Thompson noted that the City of Los Angeles is launching a new citywide speed camera pilot program, with cameras intended to change driver behavior and rotate locations over time. No camera is currently sited at this intersection, but the program may expand.
- Interim measures residents may take:
 - Install "kid alert" neon green signs (available at hardware stores, approximately \$30) on private property or in the parkway (right-of-way) to increase driver attention.
 - Install private security cameras pointed toward the street (legal if not directed at neighboring windows).
 - Contact CD13 representatives directly and submit written documentation.
 - Contact Senior Lead Officer Dan Chavez at Olympic Division for existing police records and to request increased monitoring of the intersection.

D. CD13 Contact Information Provided (Sam Uretsky)

- Hector Vega, District Director: hector.vega@lacd.org
 - Emma Howard, Community Development & Planning Director: emma.howard@lacity.org
- Note: CD13 does not currently have a Transportation Deputy.

E. Committee Discussion

Committee member Cindy Chvatal noted the critical importance of police documentation, drawing on prior experience with CD5 intersections, where LADOT required documented accident records before acting.

Sam Uretsky observed that the situation described is among the most serious he has encountered and recommended the neighbors take a coordinated approach: digitize the photo record, contact CD13 in writing with all available documentation, and mobilize neighborhood residents to submit individual letters requesting action.

Mr. DeWitt committed to sending documentation to Mr. Thompson by the following day.

Committee asked Mr. DeWitt and neighbors to keep the committee informed of progress.

V. HAWK Pedestrian Beacon — Beverly Boulevard at Mansfield Avenue

Erika Stuart reported that a HAWK (High-intensity Activated crossWalk) beacon system is being installed on Beverly Boulevard at Mansfield Avenue, splitting the residential block. Installation appeared to be progressing rapidly, with power already being run to temporary equipment.

Ms. Stuart raised the following concerns:

- The installation appeared to have occurred without advance community notification, despite its significant impact on traffic patterns on Beverly.
- The HAWK system employs five non-standard light patterns (flashing yellow, flashing red, solid red, etc.) that may confuse drivers unfamiliar with the system, particularly the flashing red phase, which mimics railroad crossing signals but requires a different response.
- Concern raised about whether installation would affect historic utility poles; Mr. Thompson indicated historic poles would not be impacted.
- Ms. Stuart requested that Mr. Thompson inquire about adding speed humps on Citrus Avenue (a longstanding safety request) as part of any outreach to the DOT assistant GM who briefed him on the HAWK project.

Mr. Thompson reported that he received notification of the installation from a DOT assistant general manager without prior warning. He indicated the installation is expected to be completed relatively quickly and will become permanent. He committed to visiting the site and providing follow-up information.

Mr. Thompson noted that based on experience with a similar installation at 3rd and Las Palmas, HAWK beacons have not caused traffic diversion into adjacent residential streets.

VI. Transportation Project Funding — General Discussion

Committee member Eliot Silver asked about the process for funding approved transportation improvement projects. Mr. Thompson explained:

- Most DOT projects are not funded from the City's general fund. Nearly all are grant funded (e.g., Metro Active Transportation Program / ATP grants, Caltrans programs).
- Many projects have been studied, approved, and placed in a Traffic Control Report, but remain unbuilt due to lack of funding. Mr. Thompson estimated approximately 100–130 such unfunded projects in his area, with costs ranging from \$100,000 to \$750,000 each—a potential shortfall of \$50 million or more.
- Projects also face significant ancillary costs: ADA-compliant curb ramp upgrades run approximately \$50,000 each.
- Community members cannot directly fund city transportation projects due to equity considerations, but the committee or neighborhood council can advocate for specific projects and identify grant programs for the City to apply to.
- Developer agreements (mitigation funds) are another potential funding source for

projects near new construction.

VII. Commission on Innovation and Performance — Grant Submission Update

Sam Uretsky reported on the status of two grant applications submitted to the Commission on Innovation and Performance:

- Both grants were submitted on time.
- The Commission president had originally requested expedited submission for inclusion on the May agenda; however, the Commission subsequently identified funding for the next fiscal year, reducing urgency. The applications did not make the May agenda. • Mr. Uretsky has inquired about placement on the June agenda; status is TBD.

Grant 1: Solar-Powered Flashing LED Stop Signs (Larchmont & Clinton intersection area) • Mr. Uretsky met with Emma Howard and Ted Walker of CD13 to request Council District support, which the Commission president indicated is necessary for the grants to advance.

- CD13 expressed reservations, citing LADOT's claim that it does not routinely use this type of stop sign and lacks spare parts inventory. Mr. Uretsky expressed strong skepticism of this rationale.
- The matter may proceed through committee and then to the full Council.

Grant 2: Ramblas / Traffic Management

- CD13 expressed interest and support. A lively discussion ensued regarding potential jurisdictional questions (whether funding should go to LADOT, Bureau of Engineering, or Bureau of Street Services).
- Emma Howard indicated that if the grant passes, a Council motion could reassign the funds to the appropriate department without requiring resubmission.

Romi Cortier noted she has observed flashing LED stop signs at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and found them effective; Sam Uretsky clarified those are wired (not solar) and have red lights, while the GWNC application specifies solar-powered signs with white lights.

VIII. Pedestrian Safety — Beverly Boulevard Sidewalk Narrowing (North Side, Gower to Larchmont)

Sam Uretsky reported on a proposal, initiated by a Gower Street neighbor, to install a pedestrian railing along the north side of Beverly Boulevard between Gower Street and Larchmont Avenue (and potentially to Arden or midway to Rossmore), where sidewalk width is effectively reduced due to a 6-inch curb area. The narrow walkway forces single file pedestrian traffic and causes walkers to step into the street to pass one another.

CD13 response to the railing proposal:

- Liability concern: CD13 expressed concern that installing a railing could increase the City's legal exposure if future accidents occurred near the improvement.
- ADA compliance concern: CD13 raised questions about whether a railing could meet

ADA requirements along this stretch.

- Overall, the proposal received a low level of interest from the Council District. The committee noted that the concrete property-line wall on the north side of Beverly contributes to the claustrophobic feel but is private property and not moveable. Mr. Uretsky stated that neighbors plan at minimum one additional round of polite written advocacy to CD13 before potentially seeking formal committee support.

IX. GWNC Community Survey Results — Transportation-Related Findings

Jennifer DeVore noted that each GWNC committee was asked to review the community survey results to identify themes relevant to their portfolio. Romi Cortier reported that a review of approximately 60 pages of survey data revealed three recurring transportation related concerns:

- Speeding on local streets
- Parking in Larchmont Village
- Sidewalk conditions

Lindsay Sturman offered to prepare a summary of the raw survey data for distribution prior to the next meeting, to allow for more structured committee discussion of findings and potential responses.

Jennifer DeVore recommended the committee add the survey results to the next meeting agenda to demonstrate responsiveness to community priorities.

Background: Eliot Silver shared his personal experience navigating the City's sidewalk repair program, illustrating the perverse incentives involved. After a pedestrian was injured on a damaged sidewalk abutting his property:

- The City paid \$90,000 in damages; his homeowner's insurance paid \$10,000. • The sidewalk was not repaired following the settlement.
- He applied for the City's sidewalk repair rebate program; the City offered a \$15,000 rebate, but all contractor quotes exceeded \$60,000.
- His attorney advised against repairing the sidewalk, because doing so would transfer liability to the homeowner for the entire frontage, not just the repaired section. The committee noted this situation reflects a broader City dynamic in which the cost of inaction (lawsuit payouts) frequently exceeds the cost of repair, yet structural incentives prevent proactive remediation.

X. Committee Member Comments and Announcements

- Sam Uretsky drew committee members' attention to an article authored by Lindsay Sturman published that day in the Larchmont Buzz, commending it as "a very good marker for the community." Jennifer DeVore also expressed appreciation for the article.

XI. Future Agenda Items

- GWNC Community Survey results — transportation-related summary and committee discussion
- Follow-up on Wilton/3rd intersection (as information becomes available from CD13 and LADOT)
- HAWK beacon at Beverly/Mansfield — follow-up from Jarrett Thompson • Commission on Innovation and Performance grant applications — status update

XII. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 16, 2025.

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:35 PM.
Respectfully submitted,**

Lindsay Sturman, Secretary

Greater Wilshire Neighborhood Council Transportation Committee