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August 12, 2014

Los Angeles City Hall  
Council District 14  
200 North Spring Street  
Room 465  
Los Angeles, California 90012

**RE: Sidewalk Closures due to construction in Downtown Los Angeles**

Dear Councilman Huizar:

I'm writing in regards to long-term sidewalk closures in Downtown LA due to construction activity. There are currently 11 buildings under construction that have streets and sidewalks closed in the South Park area of Downtown between Figueroa to Hill and 7th to Venice. There are 17 additional projects entitled or going through entitlements which will require street/sidewalk closures in the near future within this area. These construction sites typically close the adjacent sidewalk(s) for 2-3 years. The cumulative impact of these sidewalk closures are becoming safety, livability, and accessibility issues.



*Picture above: A woman in wheel chair on 7<sup>th</sup> Street in front of Macy's sidewalk closure*

As an example, at 801 S. Hope Street project at 8th and Hope, the high-rise construction closed the sidewalk for half a block. Many people were jaywalking mid-block or walking on the street. To mitigate the problem, police started giving out jaywalking tickets. That did not solve the problem. Finally, the contractor closed a traffic lane and provided a pedestrian path. The problem was resolved. The contractor had space to work and pedestrian access was not impeded. For many of the current Downtown projects, it seems that it is possible to provide pedestrian access.

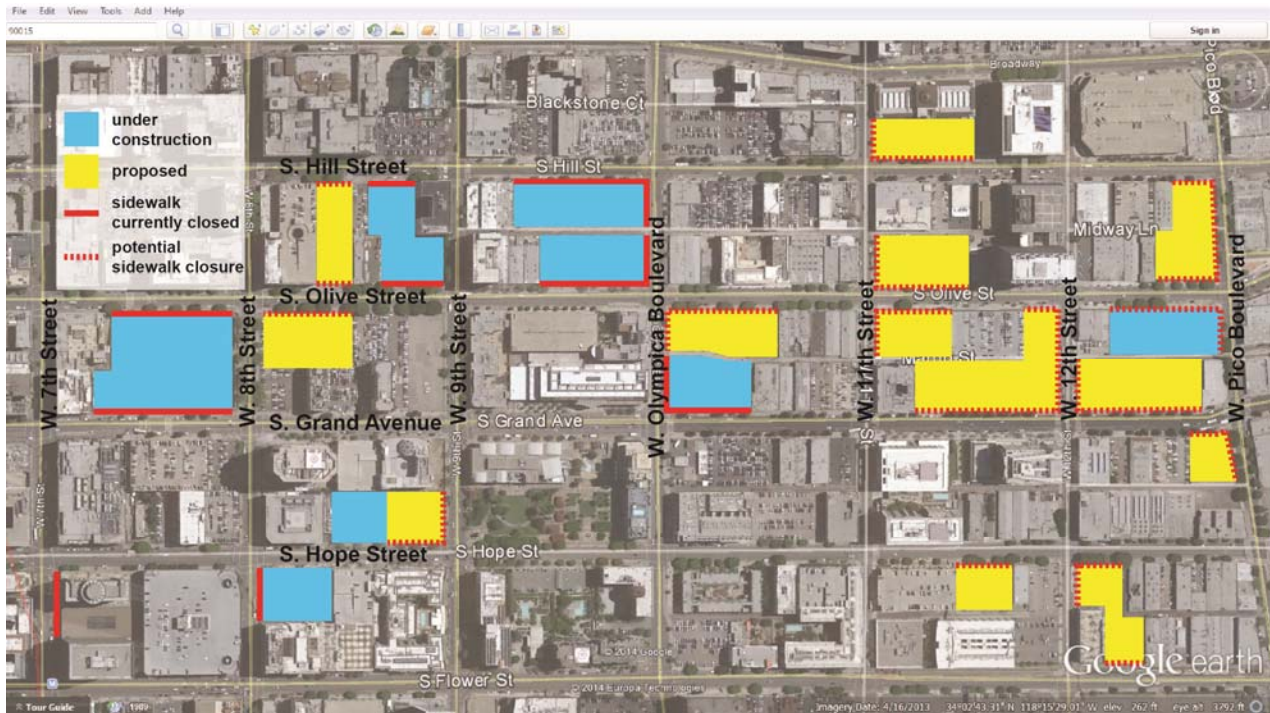


*Picture above: Picture of pedestrian access along construction fence in front of new high-rise construction on Hope St. and 8<sup>th</sup> St. This should be a requirement for all construction sites in Downtown LA.*

On the 6 block stretch of Olive Street between 7th and Pico, every block will have one or more new ground up construction that will require sidewalk/lane closures. DLANC recently received a complaint from 123 Refills, a small business located just north of the sidewalk/street closure on Olive (705 S. Olive Street) regarding a loss of business due to sidewalk closure and reduced pedestrian activity.



*Picture above: Mixed-use project on Grand/Olive & 8<sup>th</sup> Street closed two lanes, curbside parking, and sidewalk on both Grand Ave. and Olive St. for construction staging. Currently, this area is being used for two lanes of parking and a through lane drive aisle. This project will close down sidewalks on Grand, Olive, and 8<sup>th</sup> Street for approximately (3) years total.*



Picture above: Diagram of projects under construction and proposed projects in South Park with sidewalks currently closed and potential future sidewalk closures due to construction

DLANC requests that the applicable city agencies review the current street closure policy to consider the cumulative impacts of sidewalk closures in downtown and incorporate the needs of pedestrian access into account when granting sidewalk/lane closures. For the current projects that are under construction, please require these projects to provide pedestrian access along the construction fencing. If the project absolutely cannot provide pedestrian access, please limit the duration of the sidewalk closures so that impacts to pedestrians and businesses are minimized.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Patricia Berman  
DLANC President

Very truly yours,

Simon Ha, AIA, LEED AP  
DLANC Planning & Land Use Committee Chair

CC: Tanner Blackman (Council District 14)  
Ray Chan (LA Department of Building and Safety)  
Michael LoGrand (LA Department of City Planning)