



# Discover The Difference

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION  
OF THE FIGUEROA CORRIDOR PARTNERSHIP  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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## MY FIGUEROA STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

My Figueroa, the major streetscape project that would overhaul Figueroa Street from LA Live to Expo Park, is back on track after some dicey times--the project had been under the purview of the Community Redevelopment Agency of LA, but when the state killed all local redevelopment agencies last year the project was put on hold until a successor agency could be found to finish the project. That successor agency became the Los Angeles Department of Transportation last June, which will bundle the plan in with its big citywide bike lane plans. The project has also been fast tracked due to timeline issues with the grant being used to fund the improvements. My Figueroa is being designed by Melendrez Design Partners and includes funding for streetscape improvements along Figueroa Corridor from Staples Center to MLK Blvd., 11th Street from Broadway to Figueroa, and, MLK Boulevard between Figueroa and Vermont.

Although the streetscape improvements such as cycle tracks will encourage bike riding and bike safety, they will also lead to more delays and congestion for anyone riding in a car, truck or bus. Those are some of the findings in a draft Environmental Impact Report that looks at the fallout from the city's effort to add nearly 40 miles of bike lanes under the first year of a five-year bike plan. "The proposed projects would create significant and unavoidable impacts related to trans-

portation – traffic and circulation," according to the study.

South Figueroa Street has a history of being an automobile corridor and has some business owners worried that by closing down Figueroa to, at times in the current plan, one lane in each direction, the traffic congestion that already exists on the street will get worse, and keep customers from their businesses. It has been proven in some business districts that slowing down traffic actually allows the drivers to see more businesses and therefore stop and use more businesses, but those districts have not been automobile district, nor have the history that the Figueroa Corridor has. No one questions that bike safety is a priority, but some questions have been raised about the agreeive nature of the My Figueroa plan and its impact on traffic and businesses.

When Governor Jerry Brown signed A.B. 2245 into law, a law allowing certain bicycle projects to opt-out of the CEQA process, the news was somewhat buried. When the Department of City Planning unveiled the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the next five years of bicycle plan implementation and the My Figueroa project, one small paragraph in Section II showed how the game has changed.

"In September 2012, Governor Brown signed in to law Assembly Bill (AB) 2245, which allows re-striping of urban roadways to proceed under a

Statutory Exemption as long as a traffic and safety analysis is prepared and hearings are held in affected areas...The city will not be certifying the EIR or preparing a Final EIR. Rather, Notices of Exemption will be filed pursuant to 1) California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.20.5 (c)(2) – for the bicycle lanes and 2) CEQA Guidelines, Article 19, Sections 15301, 15304, and 15311 for the streetscape improvements proposed as part of the My Figueroa Project."

In plain English, the city is opting out of the lengthy EIR process for the rest of the certification and using the public outreach, traffic and safety studies to meet the requirements of A.B. 2245. This will save the city money and months of planning and allow many projects to move forward on an accelerated timeline.

The Draft EIR covered 39.5 miles of bicycle lane projects that would require the removal of parking or a mixed use travel lane in areas where the Level of Service was already a C, D or F and the My Figueroa project which covers 3 miles of Figueroa and some connecting streets in South Los Angeles and promises major streetscape, transit and bicycle access improvements.

The next opportunity for community input is April 9 at Orthopaedic Hospital, near 23rd and Flower Street, 1 block east of Fig. For more information go to [melendrez.com](http://melendrez.com).

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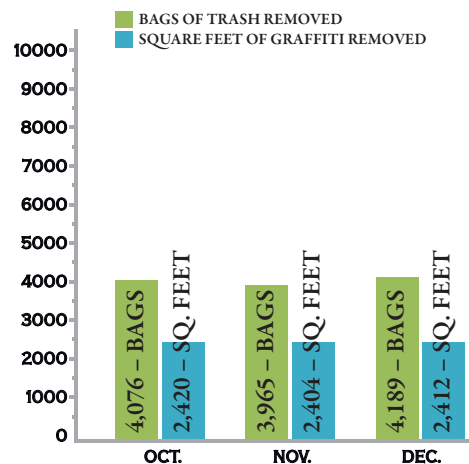
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The Figueroa Corridor Partnership is responsible for the daily management and promotion of the Figueroa/Flower/Vermont/Hoover Corridor, linking downtown Los Angeles to Exposition Park. The Partnership is committed to its development as a safe, clean, economically vibrant and aesthetically pleasing environment in which to conduct business, continue an education, visit a museum, attend a sporting event, worship, or reside.



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