

# Moms

on Scooters, buses, rideshare and more –

**South Central LAMP**

weighs in on Rideshare & Micromobility



**INVESTING**  
*in* **PLACE**



*South*  
**Central**  
**LAMP**

*Empowering families since 1993*

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# South Central LAMP

South Central Los Angeles Ministry Project (South Central LAMP) is a nonprofit agency founded by eight congregations of Catholic women, who canvassed South Los Angeles after the 1992 civil unrest to see how they could help the devastated neighborhood to rebuild. The Sisters found a large community of immigrant mothers with a strong desire to help their children succeed in school and life, but who did not understand the public school system or how to support their children's educational development. In response, South Central LAMP opened its doors in 1993 with a mission to provide a supportive, nurturing environment for economically poor women and their families by offering educational programs that empower women and their families to reach their full potential, build self-esteem, and strengthen mutual interdependent relations.

South Central LAMP is the only organization providing this kind of family-focused, holistic programming in South Los Angeles. Through our Family Literacy Program, we engage immigrant mothers and their children ages 0-5 in an integrated, mutually supporting three-year curriculum that includes:

- Parenting Education
- English as a Second Language
- Parent-Child Interactive Literacy Activities
- Family Advocacy
- Early Childhood Education



INVESTING  
in PLACE



## Investing in Place

Investing in Place is a nonprofit organization that envisions a healthy region for everyone. To do this we need a transportation system in Los Angeles that serves everyone, particularly those with the least transportation options. Los Angeles is a place of opportunity and possibility, but it can also be hard to navigate without reliable resources. We all need safe, affordable, and accessible transportation options to reach those opportunities. Investing in Place works across different sectors creating conversations about transportation policy and finance between: policy makers, community organizations, public agency staff, business leaders and more. We are working on ways to expand the voices, perspectives and data that inform transportation decision making. Los Angeles is a vast and diverse place, not everyone starts from the same place and we have the data to prove it. We want to make sure we invest in a transportation system that serves our communities of color, low income families, moms, students, seniors, and others with the fewest options.



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## Background and Purpose

How can our transportation systems better serve moms and their families – especially low-income women? Although a small body of research has begun to answer these questions, and recently Metro posted their study: [How Women Travel](#)<sup>1</sup>. Policy and investments to address these issues have been slow to follow. So when Lyft approached our organizations to work together we saw an opportunity to change this and continue to build on our work on [Moms and Mobility](#)<sup>2</sup> and our partnership with [South Central LAMP](#). Funding was made possible through [LyftUp](#).

Transportation is a field that has historically been dominated by white, privileged and male perspectives. This was an effort to change that. Our first step was to hold a listening session to discuss the realities of transportation in the South Central LAMP community, including discussions on rideshare and how existing bike share and scooter services may or may not meet the needs of women and their families. This opportunity provided a space for the women of South Central LAMP an opportunity for civic engagement, when too often their perspective is overlooked. Women, especially low income women and mothers, immigrants and people who are undocumented, have been traditionally overlooked and not successfully engaged when transportation programs are developed and implemented. For the women served in South Central LAMP’s Family Literacy Program, it was an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas to be developed into summary recommendations and then be shared with decision makers. Many women in the South Central LAMP community are immigrants, some are undocumented or with mixed-status families. These women come from countries in which they have not had a chance to use their civic rights. Even now, they are unable to fully participate in many significant civic engagement opportunities (e.g. voting, public meetings without translation or without childcare, etc) where their voices to be heard and they can take part in the change they want to see in their community.



<sup>1</sup> [https://investinginplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/UnderstandingHowWomenTravel\\_FullReport\\_FINAL.pdf](https://investinginplace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/UnderstandingHowWomenTravel_FullReport_FINAL.pdf)  
<sup>2</sup> <https://investinginplace.org/2018/03/23/moms-and-mobility-who-is-our-transportation-system-designed-for/>





## LISTENING SESSION WITH MOTHERS AND COMMUNITY

In October of 2019, South Central LAMP hosted 25 participants for the “Moms and Mobility” convening. Of the participants, all but one were women that are either participating in or have graduated from one of South Central LAMP’s programs. All participants were English as a Second Language speakers and immigrants, and some women were undocumented and/or have family members who are also undocumented. Staff from Lyft and the City of Los Angeles Department of Transportation (LADOT) also joined the conversation. The listening session lasted one hour and was followed by a communal lunch. The listening session facilitated by South Central LAMP Executive Director Diana Pinto was conducted primarily in Spanish with English translation services provided by the translation firm Antennae Aire. The focus of the listening session was to identify and discuss mobility needs and challenges for South Central LAMP community members. Most of the participants identified their primary modes of transportation as driving and taking the bus. While the majority of the participants had smartphones, very few of them had access to a credit card.



**“One of my daughters gets out from school at 2:30, earlier than my other daughters at 3:30 – I think I could have made it on time to the doctor’s appointment, but when the bus passed us up - we couldn’t.”**

**“The school my children go to at the beginning of the year they have a barbecue at Griffith park – but we can’t get there on the bus. So we didn’t go.”**



## KEY FINDINGS

### Moms Face Distinct Mobility Challenges

The women shared that public transportation in Los Angeles is difficult, especially when traveling with children. Managing strollers, diaper bags, groceries and kids is challenging when trying to catch a bus. **Being able to run multiple errands using the bus, and in particular getting to a doctors appointment, can be incredibly difficult.** Moms described how difficult it can be to get proper seating and shared experiences of falling down after being forced to stand during a ride. Participants shared that even when they are waiting at the bus stop, buses sometimes refuse to stop for them. Some moms experienced resulting in missed medical appointments for their children, some of which took over a month to schedule in the first place. Many moms have had to wait weeks to reschedule appointments with their children's medical specialists as a result of transportation challenges.

On occasion when these women have been able to utilize rideshare services, they've discovered, once the driver is there, that they cannot accept them as clients with their young children because they don't have car seats. If you don't normally commute via car, you would not have a car seat, as they are very expensive. Many shared that LADOT's DASH has been a great form of transportation because it is much less expensive for a family of five to get to places.

### Barriers to Using Tech-Enabled Mobility Options

Participants shared their experience with ridesharing services, including that many moms do not have access to this service because of the difficulty obtaining a bank account or a credit card. While many participants have smartphones, downloading, registering and utilizing phone apps are a barrier. Many of the women cannot open bank accounts, because it requires 2 forms of ID and usually one of those ID's is a social security number. This is also the barrier to credit cards, which is how many pay to download apps, so it can cause issues, although it could be a free app, so that helps lessen the barrier.

**Concerns over personal safety and the safety of their children is a recurring theme. Whether on or off the bus, witnessing unsafe activities and behaviors can be uncomfortable and at times fear inducing for the women.** Moms shared concerns about safety for their children while on the bus, such as being exposed to drug use or smoking, as well as concerns over the safety of the streets.

### Optimism Around New Transportation Options

The listening session also revealed that there are new transportation opportunities and resources available for families. Many participants shared they didn't know much about the available resources from Lyft and didn't realize that they could also partake in the rideshare programs.

The moms in the listening session learned about the various ways to access Lyft rideshare and scooter programs, while also describing the information gaps in reaching the community. **When asked "If someone showed you in-person how to use the app and help could help you navigate the system, would you be interested?" Three quarters of the women in the room raised their hands.**

The moms were most excited about using bikes, especially as a family. Bikes are a form of transportation they could see themselves using, not only because it is less expensive but also because as a family, it would be easier to manage the "riders." They could really see themselves using this form of transportation to get to further away destinations such as the beach, museums, and parks.

Many moms described feeling apprehensive about allowing their children to ride scooters. They do feel more comfortable riding scooters themselves and other adults using them on the streets, particularly at the beach where they were separated from cars. When asked if they would use bicycles or scooters in their neighborhoods if they had a lane that was protected from cars, all were interested and supportive.

#### Where would you use the bike/e-bikes to go?

Responses from community:

- The supermarket
- The park
- Museum
- Library
- Work



**"I think about my nephews – we go to the beach, we grab a scooter, it's fun it's safe – it's not necessary to bring the car. They bring their tap card."**



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## Expand Access

Several participants expressed that they enjoy using rideshare services and would like to use it more often.

Participants consistently expressed the credit card requirement as one of the biggest barriers to use, and the desire for rideshare companies to remove this as a barrier, since most community members already have smart phones to use. **Gift cards, linking family members to accounts, and making it easier for third parties to purchase rides are some of the suggestions for how to increase access for moms in South LA.**

## Design Features for Moms & Families

Being a mother in South Los Angeles is challenging. Mothers are often saddled with tasks such as buying groceries, getting everyone to school, going to medical appointments, and traveling with newborn or small children. Most times ride services do not have child seats. Buses can be too crowded and unsafe for children. Scooters and e-bikes are not well designed to carry groceries home.

### Mom/Family Specific Rideshare options:

**Just as bus seats can be designed and designated for moms, the Lyft app and some cars can also be designed to request cars with car seats.**

### Reduced Fare for Families:

There could also be pricing for moms traveling with children, just as seniors get reduced fare on the bus. Why shouldn't moms with children in South LA get a reduced fare as well? If the cost of traveling with a family of four or five on the bus is comparable to a rideshare that is faster and safer, how can rideshare services change their model to better serve these families?



## Increase Engagement with South LA Residents

### Bridge Information Gap:

Our participants reacted to new information on rideshare with excitement. Many were not aware that scooters and bikes can be rented per hour or per minute. The participants also had knowledge gaps on payment options, starting accounts, safety policy, and using the necessary phone applications.

### Expand on community partnerships:

There is a great opportunity to build upon these findings by continuing to partner with groups like South Central LAMP to identify and discuss the barriers to rideshare use --- particularly with women, and more specifically, women head of households.

## Increase Safe Streets to Increase Bike & Scooter Usage

Safety is paramount for moms. Participants cited safety concerns in allowing their children to use scooters.

### Protected Bikeways:

While there is excitement on using ebikes, there was consensus on the desire for bicycle lanes separated from cars.

### Community Based Planning

Safety features and designing safer streets should also come with investments to make sure community members are also engaged and informed.



## Accessibility is Largely in the Price

A consistent caveat echoed by participants about using Lyft and other rideshare services is cost. While the Lyft ride may be pleasant, the price deters more frequent use. As one participant stated "it was an emergency and we had to use it."

### Affordable Pricing:

Participants shared that one of the transportation options they use most frequently and consistently is LADOT's DASH line. The DASH is affordable and allows them to travel more easily with their families. The DASH is 50 cents a ride, and 25 cents for seniors and the disabled. The DASH's set price is a critical data point for planning to increase transportation access in South Los Angeles.

