

# SAN CLEMENTE

## SUN POST NEWS



FRED SWEGLER, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Could this be the future of San Clemente's Avenida Del Mar? In Leiden, Holland, the main road from the railway station to the city center is at times dominated by bicycles, not cars.

# DUTCH MODEL

SAN CLEMENTE LOOKS TO NETHERLANDS FOR TIPS IN BEING MORE BICYCLE- AND PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY. **PAGE 3**

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# San Clemente bike, pedestrian plan may go Dutch

By FRED SWEGLES  
THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

What if you could change a society's mind-set and get a lot more people out of cars and onto bicycles? The Netherlands has done it, and San Clemente is looking to take strides in that direction.

Brenda Miller, founder of a San Clemente bicycle and pedestrian advocacy group called PEDal, will appear before the San Clemente Planning Commission at 6 p.m. today at City Hall to promote San Clemente's first Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. She has had the plan in mind for four years since joining San Clemente's Traffic Task Force and has helped craft it in recent months with city staff and a consultant hired by the city.

The goal is to make San Clemente more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly and to design its traffic-circulation system to put cyclists and walkers on par with cars.

Miller discussed the concept at a Sept. 5 Planning Commission study session where she showed videos explaining how the Netherlands carried out its cycling revolution and how lessons from the Dutch can apply in America. One Netherlands video, at [streetfilms.org](http://streetfilms.org), said 27 percent of all trips in Holland now are by bicycle and that in central Amsterdam, it's close to 50 percent.

Miller said the Dutch designed their transportation network to make it easier to get around by bike than by car in urban areas. In many of those areas, bicycles dominate the landscape.

"They focus on moving people by the most efficient means possible, and for shorter distances that means the bicycle," Miller said. "By contrast, in the United States, according to the California Complete Streets Act ... 66 percent of all trips of one mile or less in the United States are made by automobile and 41 percent of all trips that are made by all modes are made at one to two miles in distance. If you combine those two statistics and we focus our transportation policies in moving people within that 41 percent and 66 percent category, we can drastically improve the efficiency and safety of our transportation network."

San Clemente's government already has taken some steps, like creating a dedicated right-turn through lane for bicycles at a four-way stop along the Pacific Coast bicycle route. The city has marked a section of that route with "sharrows," a reminder to motorists to share the road.

## Planning Commission

San Clemente's Planning Commission will discuss a proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan at 6 p.m. today at City Hall, 100 Avenida Presidio. The public is invited.

The plan addresses new standards for bicycle routes, better access for pedestrians, more facilities for bike parking, safety education, consideration of requiring bicycle facilities when approving new development, and the legitimacy of skateboarding as transportation.



**This is where cyclists store their bikes outside the railway station at Leiden, Holland. There is an equal-sized storage lane on the other side of the railing at left. And the storage site at far right extends far outside the photograph.**

Another stretch has a dedicated bicycle lane. At North Beach, the city recently equipped new traffic signals to recognize the presence of a bicycle – not just a car – to trigger a light change.

In March, city officials took a bicycle tour of Long Beach, picking up ideas on why Long Beach lays claim to being "the most bicycle-friendly city in America."

"We're already on the path," Miller said. "We're limited in the amount of road widening we can do. There's not enough space. ... We can achieve a more efficient movement overall by combining modes – automobiles, walking, bicycling and public transit. When any one of those dominates the network, we lose efficiency."

Examples, she said, are daily traffic jams outside San Clemente schools where parents line up to drop off their children. Devising safer ways to walk, bike and skateboard to school could have a significant effect on traffic and congestion, Miller said.



PHOTOS: FRED SWEGLES, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

**"Sharrows," or a chevron with a bicycle image, are a symbol to share the road. A cyclist on Ola Vista in San Clemente was riding far enough left of a parked car to avoid being hit if the door suddenly opened, a mental note that cyclists need to maintain.**



**On this street in downtown Leiden, Holland, there is only one traffic lane and two bicycle lanes. The Netherlands has changed the national mindset to get people out of cars and onto bicycles.**